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SPEAIGHT.

157, New Bond Street, W.

LADY EVELYN CAVENDISH AND TWO OF HER CHILDREN.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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CASH ON DELIVERY.

LORD STANLEY has arrived at what will generally be considered as a wise and prudent decision in regard to the question of establishing a cash-on-delivery system in connection with the Post Office. Last Monday he was met by a large deputation of the retail trade, who urged their objections very strongly against the system. They say it will be inimical to the interests of the provincial shop-keeper and tend to throw business into the hands of a few central stores. This contention is not seriously disputed. The argument against it is that, when any considerable change is made, somebody is bound to suffer. For example, the establishment of a parcel post, by enabling provincial customers to obtain certain goods easily from London and the other great towns, injured a number of local trades; but the general public gained so much by the new arrangement that there was a balance which proved it to be the greatest good for the greatest number. It is well known that the building of railways, to take another example, ruined many small towns by opening up communication with larger and better markets; but this was never regarded as a reason for not going on with them. In the case of the cash-on-delivery system the position is very much the same, except that the proposal cannot be regarded as such a very important one. As the matter stands at present a great deal of business is done in this way. People staying in the country obtain one of those huge price lists issued by the large town stores, and are thus able to send the exact amount of cash required for any order. This applies to certain goods the prices of which remain stationary, or nearly stationary, from the time that one price list is issued to that when another is due. But many articles are continually fluctuating, such as fish, butter, eggs, and so forth. This difficulty is, however, easily got over by means of a deposit. By allowing a few pounds to remain in the hands of the stores

the orders can be sent in freely and deducted as they are fulfilled. It is difficult to see how the establishment of a cash-on-delivery system would interfere with this method, or offer any increased convenience to great stores and their customers, and so far we are not sure that there is a great deal of force in the objection made by the provincial retailer.

As far as this country is concerned, we consider that the country producer is the most likely to benefit from the cash-on-delivery system. He who supplies garden and dairy produce deals in articles that continually fluctuate in value, and the system of supplying private customers is one that rapidly extends; but then its development up to now has been more owing to the agency of the railway companies than to that of the Post Office. The farmers' boxes, for instance, supplied on the Great Eastern line have no counterpart in the parcel post. Yet the system adopted by the Great Eastern Company might very well serve as a model for the agricultural post that has frequently been suggested. If it were coupled with a cash-on-delivery arrangement, it would undoubtedly be of the greatest service to those who are engaged in country pursuits. It would also be a very great convenience to the general public, who, in spite of all that has been done recently, complain, with the very best reason, that it is almost impossible to obtain eggs and similar produce perfectly fresh in London. In this department Lord Stanley's scheme could not conceivably meet with much opposition. There is no one whose interests would be seriously injured, and it might be well worth consideration whether the system could not be applied in this way. What has been done by a railway company ought to be well within the power of a Government Department. Another point may be suggested for consideration. At present many localities are busily engaged in the construction of light railways and the establishment of motor services that are specially designed for the development and improvement of rural districts. These arrangements are essentially arrangements for the collection of produce. At the other end what we want is a more effective system of distribution, and if with that there could be combined a plan for the safe and efficacious collection of payments, the farmers and market gardeners would derive a very great benefit, which would have for its corollary an improvement in the supply of fresh and wholesome food to the dwellers in towns.

Lord Stanley, although he is himself extremely in favour of the cash-on-delivery system, thought it prudent, in view of the hostility that had been manifested, to delay taking steps towards its establishment until the meeting of Parliament. He was well advised to do so, as further consideration will probably end in the evolution of a better plan than was at first proposed. He makes an exception in regard to the Colonies and Dependencies, and in this is deserving of general support. Foreign countries have gained some advantage by affording increased facilities for the postage of small parcels, and it is advisable on every account that our people should not be placed at any disadvantage in comparison with their competitors abroad. Moreover, whatever will help to increase and strengthen commercial relations with those of our race who are living in the Colonies is deserving of encouragement. In the course of his speech the Postmaster-General read an interesting letter from Lord Cromer to show that the Egyptian Post Office returns revealed a large increase in the trade between Egypt and those countries—Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, and Italy—with which she had a cash-on-delivery system. The analogy that he wanted to draw is perfectly logical. It is that manufacturers in Great Britain might, if the facilities for doing so were increased, be able to send increased quantities of their goods to individual customers in India, Canada, Australia, and our other Colonies and Dependencies. Theoretically, no doubt, considerable objection might be raised, because very great inconvenience would ensue if any large percentage of buyers at so great a distance should refuse to pay when the goods were delivered. The expense of sending them, say, to New Zealand, and having them returned, would be a considerable tax on the profits, but we scarcely think that that would work out in practice. The buyer in a cash-on-delivery system is aware at the outset that the money will be collected not by a private individual, but by a Government official; and even if he be fraudulently inclined, there will be no means of obtaining possession of the goods without handing over the money for them. Thus it may be presumed that he will order only what he means to pay for, and, indeed, we see no reason to suppose that the cash-on-delivery system would not work efficiently as far as the Colonies and Dependencies are concerned.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Evelyn Cavendish and two of her children. Lady Evelyn Cavendish is the daughter of the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne, and was married in 1892 to Victor Christian William Cavendish, Esq., M.P., heir-presumptive to the Duke of Devonshire.



LAST week will ever remain a memorable one in the history of Great Britain, since it is no exaggeration to say that for days we were trembling on the brink of war. The Russians displayed a very great reluctance to offer the frank apology and full amends required by England for the unwarrantable outrage upon our fishermen in the North Sea. We have the Prime Minister's own word for it that not until the time of grace had well-nigh expired did word come that the Czar and his Ministers had yielded to our representations. The incident has now entered upon a stage that must be a prolonged one. It is practically handed over to a court of arbitration, such as was contemplated at the Hague Convention. We in England certainly make no pretence of believing that there are two sides to the case, as no argument and no evidence can explain away the fact that fishermen pursuing their avocation in their legitimate grounds were fired upon by armed vessels. On the other hand, it is only fair to admit that the Czar, having received from his officers a report contradictory to this, was entitled to examine into the truth of the matter, and of course the International enquiry is bound to be a prolonged one. It will be some time before we hear the result of the proceedings.

Since we last wrote the situation in the Far East has undergone no perceptible change. It continues to offer one of the strangest spectacles recorded in history. Two gigantic armies, the like of which never have been in the field before, stand facing one another armed with implements of destruction of the most terrible kind. Even the manner in which they have been transported to such a vast distance from their bases is in itself a miracle. How they are fed and doctored and cared for is a question that if answered would necessitate the description of a vast and minute organisation. They stand facing one another; and the issue, according to the most expert opinion, is still in doubt. Marshal Oyama, despite the brilliance shown by himself and his generals, has rendered his task more difficult by, in all probability, undervaluing the defensive power of his adversaries. Russian generals and soldiers have always shown a remarkable power of recovery after being beaten, and now the task of overcoming them has become more difficult because of the reinforcements continuously poured in. At Port Arthur the tragedy is obviously deepening to a climax. On previous occasions we have written as though the defence might be indefinitely prolonged; but the period for that is now past, and the civilised world will be relieved when the end comes, as from all accounts the fighting has been the most savage and pitiless known in modern warfare. It has been a great attack and a great defence, and we almost wish that General Stoessel could see his way to surrender now and avoid the last act.

In the light and airy manner natural to him, Lord Rosebery the other day, in opening a museum at Kingston-on-Thames, drew a suggestive contrast between the civilisation of our Saxon ancestors and that of the present day. It was not altogether in favour of the latter. We have many improvements, and yet it is a question whether they conduce to the greater comfort of living. In fact, if we turn to the records of lunacy and kindred diseases, we should almost be compelled to reply with a negative. The Saxon princess described by Lord Rosebery, amongst her many luxuries, had what would be regarded in a cottage of to-day grave drawbacks. Her floor was strewn with rushes where we have carpets. The walls would not keep out draughts, and the banquetting-hall must have been at times decidedly smoky; but, on the other hand, there is a serious truth underlying Lord Rosebery's jocular remark that, if our Saxon ancestors were to come to life again and see our motor-cars and bicycles and trains rushing about, they would desire to go back to the grave very speedily. These contrivances, much as they have added to our convenience and pleasure, have also, along with the telegraph and telephone and similar instruments, intensified the

fever of life and curtailed the opportunities for that leisured rest which our forefathers found so recuperative. Even in our holiday moments we live in a hurry, and it may well occur to many if there be no means available of slackening the pace.

Sir Robert Finlay is certainly a lawyer and statesman of many-sided mental activities. His recent address to the subscribers in London to the British School at Athens, when proposing the adoption of the annual report, had an interest that was both intrinsic and personal. On the personal side it was interesting, as revealing the Attorney-General's sympathy with Greek culture and knowledge of the history of Greek art; and it was intrinsically interesting from the special attention that it drew to the comparative antiquity of Greek culture. As Sir Robert Finlay well observed, the recent discoveries in Crete and the Aegean, in some part due to the labour of the British School at Athens, appear to lend the colour of truth to those accounts of Minos which we had been taught at school to regard as purely legendary. To many who read Sir Robert's speech, and who have not followed, since leaving school, the advances that have been made in our knowledge of the history of ancient Greece, it will be a genuine surprise to learn that, so long ago as two thousand years or thereabouts before the time of Homer, a high state of civilisation had prevailed in Crete. Some further light is thrown on these dark places of ancient history by the most interesting accounts of the excavations at Knossos given in the last annual report of the work of the British School at Athens.

BEGGARS WOULD RIDE.

In Rotten Row the lordlings ride
And you and I may stand aside
To watch delights that once we knew
Squandered upon the lucky few
Who grasp the gifts to us denied;
Were wishes horses, had we cried
For Don and Jess—and so astride,
And should I, sweetheart, pace with you
In Rotten Row?

Nay, if it were the country-side,
Our kingdom once, should Fate provide
Again an hour as when we flew
'Long Caulkays height and won the view
Beyond—not ours the Cockneys' pride
In Rotten Row.

H. RAPHOE.

How will the Life of Lord Beaconsfield, on which Mr. Money Penny is engaged, compare with Mr. Morley's Life of Mr. Gladstone? That is a question that is often asked in many circles that are not at all literary or political at the present time. Part of the answer, no doubt, has to be that they will not compare, although the attempt at comparison is inevitable. No two characters, perhaps, could present greater contrasts than those of the two great statesmen who stood "over against" each other for so long. The task of the biographer of each is very different. Mr. Morley had the immense mass of Gladstone's death; many years have passed, according to the provisions of Lord Beaconsfield's will, since the papers were originally entrusted to Lord Rowton, and only now, at length, have they been put into an editor's hands by Lord Rothschild. It cannot be said that Mr. Money Penny brings to his task an assured reputation in biographical writing, such as Mr. Morley brought to his task. It cannot be said that any other Englishman but Mr. Morley has such a reputation; but of Mr. Money Penny enough is known to give assurance of his fully sufficient qualifications. He was for some five years assistant-editor of *The Times*, has edited-in-chief the *Johannesburg Star*, and was a contributor to the *Spectator* and other weekly papers. We are told that we may expect the "life" in two years.

That very singular survival of the Middle Ages, the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau, continues to have an attraction that is perhaps increasing in proportion as the conditions of modern life in general recede further and further from the conditions in which its performance arose. That play is given every ten years; its last performance was in 1900; its next, presumably, will be in 1910. But in intermediate years certain dramas, some of an historical and some of a religious character, are given in the theatre; and for next year one of the most interesting, perhaps the most interesting after the Passion Play itself, is announced. This is "The School of the Cross," which was first given in 1875 to commemorate the presentation of a Calvary to the people of Ober-Ammergau by the late King Ludwig of Bavaria. The subject is principally the life of King David, as it foreshadows the life of the Messiah who was to come from his descendants. This play is not nearly as long as the Passion Play, occupying less than five hours in representation. Five hours may seem

sufficiently long for most theatrical pieces; but the Passion Play is very distinctly unlike other theatrical pieces, and few who have witnessed it have complained of its being too long.

Sir Herbert Maxwell draws attention to the question, "What has become of last year's salmon?" Every angler knows that in the summer and autumn of 1903 more salmon were seen on the upper waters than ever were known before. These were nearly all mature fish, not grilse. These fish lost a percentage of their numbers by the rod. But probably 80 per cent. spawned, and went down as kelts to the sea to be "mended." The natural expectation was that they would come up the rivers again this summer. Yet according to skilled conjecture not more than half of them did come up. On the fifteen best beats of the Tay, for instance, only 483 salmon were taken, as against 874 last year, a falling off of 44½ per cent. Sir Herbert finds the answer in the reply of a Scotch witness being examined before the Fishery Commission. "Weel, my lords and gentlemen, it's a weel-kent fac' in our country that whaur there's nae watter there can be nae fish." In the year 1903 the rivers were early in flood. In 1904 they were very low, and there was no great body of fresh water running into the sea to "advertise" to the salmon that there was a chance to get up the rivers. It seems clear that many salmon "hang about" in the sea and do not spawn every season.

It is only a few years ago that we were told very freely that that valuable food-fish, the herring, was vanishing from the waters surrounding our islands, and there were not wanting those who were ready to expound to us the why and wherefore of its vanishing. The trawlers were widely accused of destroying the spawn of the fish by those who are not very well acquainted with the rocky nature—unsuitable for the travel of the trawl—of the ground to which the spawn of the herring generally adheres. In several previous years we have found the statements about the destruction of the herring to be premature, and lately the fish have been selling at Great Yarmouth at a price that works out at something like forty fish to the penny. That is not to say that for a single penny you might buy forty herrings, but that on the wholesale purchases the price came out at that, namely, at 30s. for a last, which means 13,200 herrings. These are figures and prices that hardly look like the extermination of the fish.

IDLE PLOUGHS.

In lonely leisure, one by one,
Beneath the rowan boughs,
With mouldboards glistening in the sun
Stand Summer's idle ploughs.
The hemlock reaches over them,
The bindweed chains them down,
The bluebells are their diadem,
The rowans red their crown.
A robin on the rusty share
Sings of a far-off Spring,
Of snowdrops peeping everywhere
And thrushes on the wing.
A tiny field-mouse flits in glee
Across the horseless bars;
And, as it were in mockery,
Above them wink the stars.
Beside them pass the laden wains
Along the headland road,
With creak and clink of collar-chains
And rustle of the load.
Forgotten is the humble toil
That helped us in our need,
The tools we set against the soil
To break it for the seed.
Along Life's road our waggons climb
While, 'neath the branching boughs,
Forgotten at the harvest-time
Stand friends—like idle ploughs.

WILL H. OGILVIE.

Dissatisfaction has been lately expressed in more than one quarter with what is described as the over-centralisation of the English fruit trade—the system, that is, by which everything comes to Covent Garden Market on its way from the producer to the consumer, even though they may live within a mile or two of one another in Kent, or Essex, or Hertfordshire. An extreme example of this has recently been seen in the large orders for blackberries which have been sent to Covent Garden by dealers in various Midland cities. It certainly seems absurd that fruiterers in Northampton or Birmingham should be obtaining wild fruit from London which was quite probably picked in their own immediate neighbourhoods, and the fruit naturally costs the

consumer a good deal more in consequence, and, by the time it comes into his hands, is a great deal less fresh and attractive than it ought to be. There seems especially little reason for the trade to be carried on in this circuitous manner when it is taken into consideration that, for some cause or another, there is nothing like the same general demand for blackberries among the poorer classes in London as there is in most of these large Midland towns.

All kinds of wild berries are so plentiful this autumn that if there was any real truth in the common belief that such plentifulness is a sign of a hard winter, we might well expect the winter of 1904-5 to prove as exceptionally severe as that of 1894-95, which is still pretty fresh in the memories of most of us. As a matter of fact, of course, the supposed connection between the fruits of autumn and the frosts of the subsequent winter is supported neither by reason nor by the evidence of actual records. The autumn crops of hips and haws, and the numerous other berries on which birds feed eagerly when the soil is frost-bound, depend, like all other fruits, upon the weather of the preceding spring and summer, and no one has as yet been able to detect any connection whatever between the weather of March or June and that of the following December and January. Among the birds which will come to feed on the pink and orange berries of the spindle-tree, which are plentiful this autumn like all the rest, are golden pheasants, where they are kept in parks and coverts in a half-wild state. To see a score or so of the magnificently-coloured cocks and their soberer hens clambering about the naked bushes after the brightly-coloured berries, above a carpet of pure snow, is an experience which for sheer brilliancy of colour is not likely to be forgotten.

It is noticeable that in spite of all the fine weather of the past six or eight months, which has been so favourable for most forms of outdoor life, it has not been at all a good year for butterflies, or for other less attractive kinds of insect life, such as house-flies and wasps. It takes more than one favourable season, after such destructive years as the two before the present, to restore the average numbers of insects which depend upon the annual reproduction of their species, and are consequently very badly hit by a single cold and rainy summer. On the other hand, a series of hot, dry years renders insect life disproportionately plentiful. Four or five summers ago many specimens of butterflies, such, for instance, as the Marbled White and the White Admiral, appeared in districts in the South of England where they had previously been quite unfamiliar. This extension of their range was beyond doubt due in the main to their numbers being greatly increased by the series of hot, dry summers which began in 1893. In the last three summers they have disappeared again, and, for the time being, many others seem to have vanished with them.

A somewhat out-of-the-way experiment has just been tried at Copenhagen, where a number of distinguished Hebrew scholars have had an exact model of Noah's Ark made, the cost of which was defrayed by the Carlsberg Naval Fund. They followed the most ancient representation of the ark known, which is given on an Apamean coin dated 300 years before Christ, and now in the Stockholm Museum. When the ark was launched on the waters of the Sound it behaved admirably, a correspondent describing it as skimming gracefully over the waves, and veering with the changing winds with an ease as though worked by a propeller. Experts declare that it is one of the most simply constructed vessels possible, and that the original designers seem to have mastered the first principles of modern ship-building. This would be in accord with many things that we read in the Pentateuch, where, for instance, much is found that seems to anticipate the requirements of modern sanitary science.

"Alas, poor Yorick"! What more need be said about the late Mr. Dan Leno, while his gibes, his gambols, his songs, his flashes of merriment that set the table in a roar are still so fresh in our remembrance? He died early in the week, at what was little more than middle age. It is almost impossible for us, who were the lookers on, to associate hard work with one who seemed always bubbling over with fun and laughter, but it seems to have been hard work that killed him. He began his appearances before the public at the early age of three, his father and mother having been of the tribe of mimes, and as a baby postured and sang and danced almost as soon as he could walk. Since then he had no rest till it was forced on him by ill health. It was about 1889 that he came very prominently before the public, and after that his fame went on extending to an extraordinary degree, and had he lived to something near the Psalmist's limit, his place as a comedian would have been perhaps the highest in the world. As it is, he has died with his honours thick upon him, and thousands, who only knew him from his public appearance, join in a lament for as amusing a jester as ever graced the English stage.

SCENES OF VILLAGE LIFE.



H. Bond.

THE AFFAIRS OF THE VILLAGE.

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FROM my own apartment there is to be obtained a long view of the old-fashioned village street, with its creeper-clad houses roofed with thatch, and each with its small garden in front shut off from the highway by a substantial stone wall. Both the men and women are gossips, but there is a considerable difference in their habits. You find the men generally discussing the affairs of the neighbourhood, and the latest in big gooseberries or turnips, leaning over the pigsty gate, or, what is still more common, assembled at the little gate leading into the churchyard. There on Sunday mornings, or at eventide when the work of the day is done, they come to smoke their pipes and hold their informal parliaments. But it is in the afternoon that the women most commonly meet. There is an interval in cottage life, between the time at which the dinner dishes are cleared away and before tea is ready, when the neighbours, if they happen to foregather, seem to have plenty of time to discuss their own affairs and those of other

people. Such a pleasing group is shown in one of our illustrations. One of the women, having come out from the cottage, is leaning over the wall admiring the small child carried by a second, while a third, who has been feeding some of her livestock, pauses to look on with the pail in her hand. It is a pretty picture, and loses nothing from the fact of its being so common. But these are resorts for fine weather only. In winter there is no place where the rustics love better to meet than in

the smithy. Here they have warmth and light and amusement. It seems almost to please them to hear the great hammer ringing on the anvil, and as in the course of the day there are always from half-a-dozen to twelve horses arriving to be shod, there is plenty of opportunity to criticise the animals and to hear news of distant cottages and farms from the grooms and labourers who bring the horses. The smith himself is the handy-man of the village, and can get through in some sort of manner any odd job committed to his charge. He is a great politician and



P. Lewis.

AN OLD COURTYARD.

Copyright

controversialist in his way, and starts many of the arguments that take a lively turn and excite the village casuists. Some of these discussions are odd enough. Despite the advance of education, it has never yet been settled by this parliament to its satisfaction that the world is round, but the majority consider it to be flat, like a pancake; nor can any proof be brought forward that is successful in convincing them that the orthodox opinion is the right one. In politics the circle is not much interested, at any rate in the fiscal question, but most of them have tried

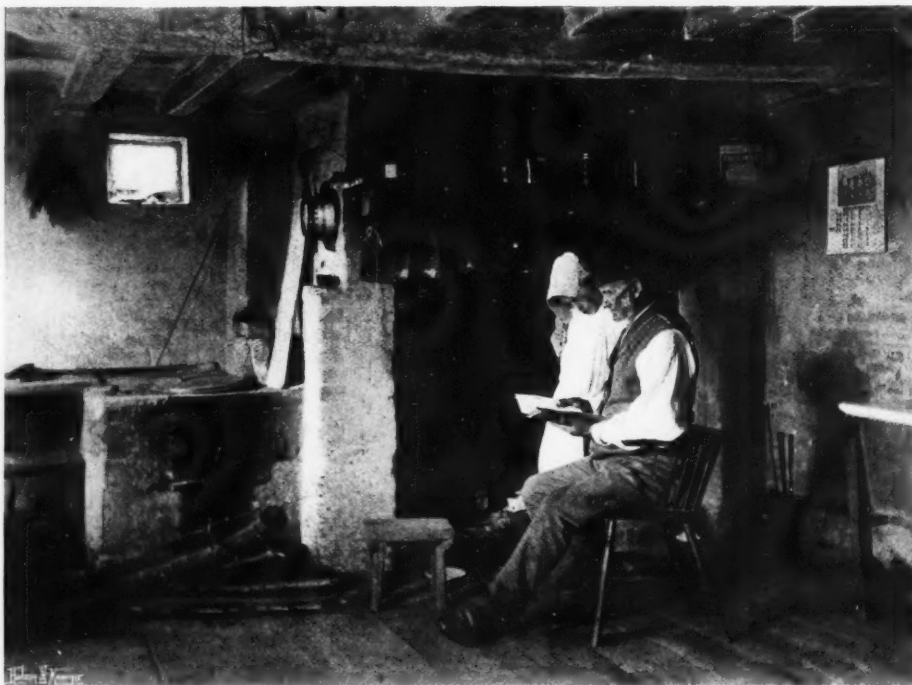


R. Forbes.

THE COBBLER.

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hard to follow the fortunes of the Russian and Japanese armies, and have strong opinions as to the rival merits of Generals Kuropatkin and Kuroki, while their admiration for the defenders of Port Arthur is beyond utterance. The smith is mostly interested in the question of engineering, and has worked out for himself a plan of tunnels and trenches by which he is certain that the fortifications could be taken. There is no end to the interest, amounting almost to amazement, with which they hear the wonderful stories in the newspapers as to the distance to which projectiles can be shot. No doubt, Shamosi is a wonderful powder, but, if it were a tenth part as potent as the



E. W. Burch.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

Copyright



H. C. Seal.

AN ODD JOB.

Copyright

villagers believe, it would almost overturn continents by its explosion. Another favourite meeting-place of the male gossips is the shop of the cobbler, who in his opinions is whimsical rather than aggressive. He has a great eye for all that he thinks "cu'rus," and his smile, that never rises to a laugh, is one of the pleasantest expressions that it is possible to witness. Curiously enough, although his work is the most sedentary of any in the village, he is more at home in the fields than any of his neighbours. Indeed, the hearty gamekeeper, who has not been here long, often tells, with a laugh, how on his arrival he carefully shadowed the cobbler morning after morning, in the certain belief that he could be after no good walking along the hedgerows and by the covert-sides at this early hour. He laughs at himself now, because he was not long in finding out that it was not the hares and rabbits, but

the small people of the hedgerow and field, the little birds and tiny beasts, in which the cobbler was interested. And it is not in the feathered and furred creatures alone that he delights, for there is not a wild flower that blows in the corn or at the hedge-side that he cannot name, though, sooth to say, his titles savour more of the countryside than the Latin dictionary. Curious names long forgotten by the rest of the world are remembered by him. It is said that a man is known by the company he keeps, and the

villagers who gather in the cobbler's shop are all more or less akin to him in habit and disposition. They, too, know the field and the hedgerow, bird and beast and flower, though not so well as he does, and often they speak of him as a marvel, a man knowledgeable and far beyond the ordinary. He reads, too, but the book with which he is best acquainted is that which his grand-daughter spells over to him on Sunday afternoons. Verse by verse, chapter by chapter, he has conned it over and over again from beginning to end, and, indeed, his natural history is so old-fashioned that he is convinced that every pernicious weed and every kind of vermin has its place and function in a world which was contrived and set a-going by a beneficent power. The truth is that amongst the oldest generation of villagers piety survives in a very simple and sincere form; and the old lady that we show in the eventide of her life, reading her book at the window, is as sincerely religious as the cobbler himself. Perhaps it would be well if the younger generation resembled them more in that respect.

From the window that I spoke of at the beginning, the church door is visible, and I know that the path leading to it is green with moss and little tufts of grass coming up where formerly they would have been trodden out of existence. Often I wish, and I daresay there are many others who do the same, that it still were possible to pass along that path and join in the service with the ancient whole-hearted enthusiasm. It may be that this feeling has gone never to return, that in an age of scientific thinking and discovery changes are inevitable; but, at the same time, it must be admitted that the continual rooting up of old beliefs is a mischievous process unless a new creed can be sown in their place. It is a lament over the whole extent of the countryside that rural churches are almost empty, and as far as I can judge from my point of vantage, the place of the church has been usurped by the bicycle, for on Sundays young and old come swinging past the corner of my garden, down the highway, past the village pump, and on to who knows where. It may be good for their health, though one would think that people who spend

six days a week working in the open air are not particularly needful of similar exercise on the Sunday; but, at any rate, it is a sign and symbol of a great change, a change that makes one have a kindly feeling towards the pious old men and women of a generation that still lingers, but soon must depart.

Such, at least, are a few of the reflections that pass through my mind as, from the window of my own apartment, I watch that infinitesimal part of the world's pageant which shows itself in a village street. I call it infinitesimal, and yet it sometimes appears to me as though it were a microcosm, showing in its tiny sphere all the features of the great world. Here are transacted tragedies and comedies none the less real because to the witless outsider the centre of interest seems no larger or more important than the village pump. He is wrong, and, if he would ascend to my upper chamber, I would show him why. To every drama there is but one fifth act; and the epilogue to the play is seen where the turf heaves over many an

unheadstoned grave. Death, believe me, is as grave and serious a business in the humblest cottage as it is on the most glorious battlefield.

"SALMON" IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

IT is so generally admitted that the attempted acclimatisation of *Salmo salar* at the Antipodes has signally failed, while, on the other hand, parallel experiment with the trout of more than one species, or variety, has been correspondingly successful, that I was surprised not long since to be taken to task for denying the existence of salmon in the streams of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. It was in connection with the recent death of Sir Thomas Brady that someone drew attention to his successes with salmon "down under." I

ventured to suggest that it was with trout that the only successes had been recorded. Whereon the advocate of the salmon theory declared that official handbooks dealing with those colonies expressly stated that in the present year of grace excellent salmon-fishing could be had for the asking.

Nearly ten years have gone since I wandered along the banks of the tumbling Derwent, Tasmania's most flourishing trout river, and it seemed just possible that in the interval something had really been done (the Derwent was expressly mentioned by this gentleman) with salmon which had escaped my notice. The specific statements from official handbooks seemed too serious to dismiss lightly. I looked up what Mr. Boulenger had to say on the subject in the COUNTRY LIFE fishing volumes, and found nothing but a corroboration of my own convictions. To make assurance doubly sure, I communicated with Professor Wyndham Dunstan, F.R.S., whose official position at the Imperial Institute must necessarily bring him in touch with these various colonial handbooks, most of which are issued under the auspices of the different Governments.

And now, I think, the mystery is cleared up. It is perfectly evident that the word "salmon" is misused, in all good faith, no doubt, for trout. There is, of course, a sea-fish (*Arripis*) on the coast of New South Wales, a flaccid mullet-like creature, which I have often seen beachcombers foul-hook whenever a shoal came sufficiently close in shore for a bunch of unbaited hooks to be drawn across it. This fish is called a "salmon," and, save for its silvery armour, it bears no more resemblance to that fish, either alive or on the table, than it does to a cod. This, however, is less serious than the official misnomer of trout, because, from a variety of causes, it is less likely to carry conviction.

Professor Dunstan has kindly furnished me with extracts from a number of these official year-books, many of which display this confusion between salmon (which have no place in those rivers, nor ever perhaps will have) and trout (which flourish there even more than in their old homes) to which reference has



J. Patrick.

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

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been made. In an article on acclimatisation in the New Zealand official year-book for 1894, Mr. Rutherford refers to the occurrence of not only parr and smolt (which were to be expected, seeing how many tens of thousands were turned down), but also of what he calls "quasi-grilse." The appendix to the journals of the New Zealand House of Representatives frankly admits five years later the failure of all efforts to make the salmon at home in that part of the world.

The Australian Handbook for 1902 declares that in New Zealand "several descriptions of fish, such as salmon, trout, etc., have been satisfactorily acclimatised." Professor Dunstan suggests that there is no indication whether the word "acclimatised" here means to include the return of mature fish from the sea, or merely liberation of young fish, but from the angler's point of view, of course, the expression can convey but one meaning.

The official handbook for Tasmania (1888) specifically mentions that "the principal rivers . . . are well stocked with various species of Salmonidæ, *Salmo salar*, the salmon . . .," etc., and this misstatement is repeated, with even more emphasis, four years later in the official record. The first indication of the real mistake is found in Walch's Tasmanian

Almanac for 1903, in which it is stated that brown trout are frequently exposed for sale under the name of "salmon." The expression "salmon-fishing" is frequently found in official proclamations of Western Australia in 1899 and 1900, and, without doubt, refers to trout. As the subject is of so much interest to naturalists and anglers who contemplate visiting those remote regions of the globe, it seems worth giving publicity to these evidences of a misnomer calculated seriously to mislead. And in publishing these brief extracts, which I owe to Professor Dunstan's courtesy, I am most reluctant to impute any intentional falsification to the sources from which they are taken. In former days, no doubt, a less rigorous official censorship and a less critical public permitted these handbooks to put every consideration after the attraction of the immigrant. It, in those times, it had been thought that the promise of rocs in the covert, or griffins on the plains would induce sportsmen to spend money in the colonies, it is to be feared that corroborative evidence of their abundance would have been forthcoming. To-day, however, the irresponsible guide-book has been replaced by a sounder type of publication, and mis-statements like these touching the salmon are the result of confusion in terms, and not of a systematic plan of misleading the traveller.

F. G. AFLALO.

THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE'S PIGS.

IN a well-known passage Mr. Harrison Ainsworth once gave a charming description of those Sussex Downs on which the livestock of the Duchess of Devonshire is now kept, and, although it is somewhat too poetic for agricultural purposes, we can scarcely help quoting it: "No breeze so fresh and invigorating as that of these Sussex Downs; no turf so springy to the foot as their soft greensward! A flock of larks flies past us, and a cloud of mingled rooks and starlings wheels overhead. Mark yon little T-shaped cuttings on the slope below us—those are the snares set by the shepherd for the delicious wheatear, our English ortolan. The fairies still haunt this spot, and hold their midnight revels upon it, as yon dark green rings testify. The common folk hereabouts term the good people 'Pharisees,' and style these emerald circles 'hay tracks.' Why, we care not to enquire. Enough for us the fairies are not altogether gone. A smooth soft carpet is here spread out for Oberon and Titania, and their attendant elves, to dance upon by moonlight; and there is no lack of mushrooms to form tables for Puck's banquets."

To make an abrupt descent from prose poetry to the most prosaic prose, this land makes the most excellent ground for rearing all kinds of livestock, and



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MODEL PENS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

even the homely pig benefits from the salubrity of the sea breezes. The breed selected by the Duchess of Devonshire to

complete her fine show of pedigree livestock was the Berkshire, which, besides being one of the most fashionable, is indubitably one of the best pigs of the day. No doubt the *laudator temporis acti* thinks that during the last quarter of a century the breed has been allowed to deteriorate through too much exhibiting. Twenty-five years ago it was maintained in a large measure for the purpose of supplying the market with the highest quality of pork. It was as good-looking then as now, and perhaps a little more robust, while its prolificacy had not been injured by too much inbreeding. The piglets used to make great progress, and in the course of twelve months furnished the lean pork so much in favour. Then the magnates of the show-yard began to insist upon quality and colour, and in consequence there was rather too much breeding for points. Another circumstance that perhaps militated against the fortunes of the Berkshire was the craze for them taken by American breeders, who, regardless of expense, acquired the



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POLEGATE DEBONAIR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

best specimens to be had in this country, and took them across the Atlantic. Quite recently, however, there has been a change again in the right direction, and those pigs which we illustrate to-day ought to satisfy the requirements of the practical man of commerce as much as they please the eye of the fancier.

The piggeries in which the Duchess of Devonshire keeps her beautiful Berkshires are situated about a mile on the north-east side of Eastbourne, and form part of the home farm. As might be inferred from Mr. Harrison Ainsworth's glowing description, the climate is extremely conducive to their health, and it is helped by the soil, which is a sandy loam on a chalk subsoil, and never takes long in drying. The piggeries consist of a range of buildings having boiler-room, storehouse, etc., complete in the centre, and pens for breeding sows on either side. We give a picture of a middle pen, in which the detail is so well brought out that the construction explains itself. In addition there are field sties with thatched roofs, each having a grass paddock adjoining, where plenty of exercise can be obtained exercise being



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POLEGATE DOLLAR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bined winnings of almost any other two herds of Berkshires. In 1904, however, when a little more experience had been

gained, the herd did even better, and out of fifteen shows attended the various pigs gained eighty-nine awards, and could boast of having twenty-four individual winners of money prizes.

Of the sows in the illustrations the pick of the lot as a breeding sow is Delightful Lady, whose portrait was taken just as she had brought up a large litter, and when, in consequence, she was not so beautiful to look at as when in the show-ring. She is by Baron Kitchener, her dam being Compton Princess. She won first



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POLEGATE DAYDREAMS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

all breeds, three reserve championships, twenty-six equal first, eleven second, and three third prizes, a record equal to the com-

prize and was champion sow at the Oxford County Show, was first and reserve for champion at the Bath and West of England Show at Cardiff, and was first and placed reserve for two champions at the Royal Counties in 1903, and she has bred winners at this year's shows. Her sire won two champions at the Royal Counties Show and the challenge cup at the Royal Lancashire Show in 1903. Daydreams is another sow that has won in the show-yard this year, having obtained first prize at the Wiltshire County Show, second at the Highland and reserve at the Yorkshire Shows. Of the group of four sows, Polegate Debora, Polegate Dainty, Polegate Dark Beauty, and Polegate Declaration, three, in addition to being winners themselves, have bred winners in the show-yards this year.

Cecil Augustus, the boar in the illustration, has an excellent type of Berkshire head on him. He was never shown,



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A GROUP OF CELEBRITIES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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CECIL AUGUSTUS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

but has sired a large number of prize-winners, and his progeny bid fair to do well again next year. Dollar is another good type of young Berkshire boar, and is considered too good to leave her Grace's herd. One of her grandest breeding sows that has been seen in the show-yard in recent years was Decoy, who, after winning consistently all this and last season, was lately sold, and, with Polegate Dame, Polegate Dawn, Polegate Doctor, and others of the herd, was exported to Canada. The success of the herd has also attracted the attention of German breeders, who have become buyers.

In conclusion, we would like to point out, quite apart from the immediate subject under notice, the advisability of English pig-breeders obtaining information as to the requirements of those who produce bacon on the other side of the Atlantic, since the whole business of breeding pedigree stock is in large measure dependent on the foreign demand. It might almost be enough to refer those interested to a large pamphlet, or book, printed by the United States Department of Agriculture, in which the points required are stated very clearly.

It is a business document, for, of course, when the slaughter-house is reached the question of breed does not arise. The writer says very truly, "In actual practice the man who feeds for the

market recognises not breed, but type. His selections may be made promiscuously from among the available material, but all are required to conform to a certain standard, which, when fattened, is the hog demanded by the market; for with all meat-producing animals the stock that is fed for market must conform to market requirements to return a profit to the feeder. Therefore, if they are to maintain their standing, the breeds that produce these animals must be managed so that their produce will meet the market demands, and thus the market qualifications become the standard not only for a few breeds, but for all. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the breeds of beef cattle and hogs." In connection with this it may be useful to quote the American summary of the points of a Berkshire, which are:

"That the head should be short, broad, and coming well forward at poll; a head long and narrow is considered



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FORAGING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bad. The eyes should be very clear, rather large, dark hazel or grey. If they are small, dull, obscure, they are bad. The sight should not be in any way impaired by wrinkles or fat. The ears

should be almost erect, but sometimes incline forward with advancing age. They should not be large, coarse, thick, round, or drooping. The neck should be full, deep, short, and slightly arched, broad on top, and well connected with the shoulder, which should be broad, deep, and full. The chest should be large, wide, deep, and roomy, with the breast-bone curving well forward. The back should be broad and straight, carrying the same width from shoulder to ham, surface even and smooth, without creases or projections, and not too long. The sides ought to be full, smooth, firm, and deep; the ribs long, strong, and well sprung at top and bottom. The belly should be wide, full, and straight on bottom line; the legs short, straight, and strong, set wide apart, with hoofs erect and capable of holding good weight. The tail ought to be set well up, fine, tapering, and neatly curled. The Berkshire should have a straight, smooth coat, lying close to and covering the body well. The colour should be black, with white on feet, face, tip of tail, and an occasional splash on arm. The weight for a boar two years and over should be not less than 450lb.; a sow at the same age, 400lb."



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DELIGHTFUL LADY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

SOME BEST DAYS.

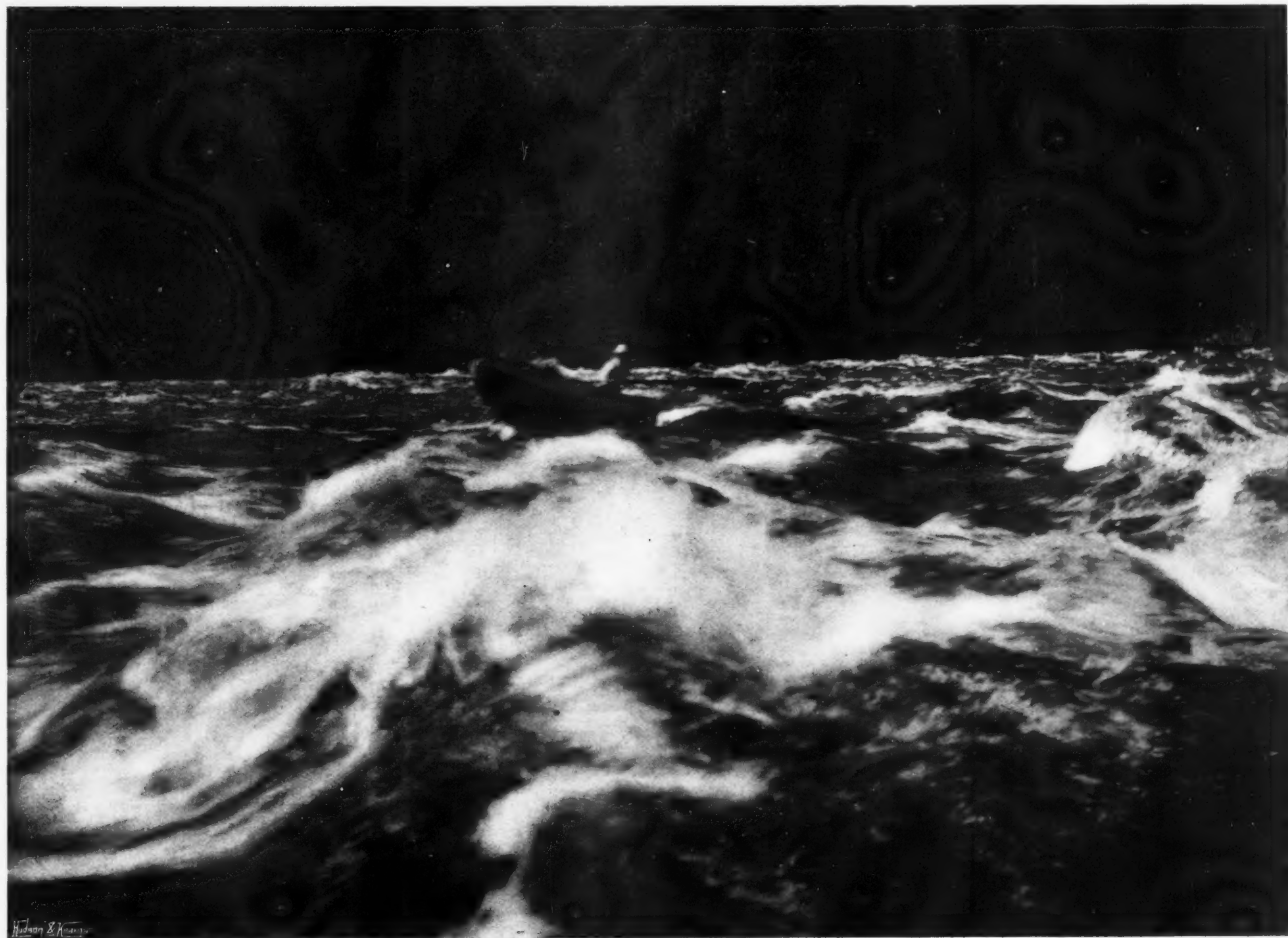
HOW often are we asked the question, "What was your best day's sport?" in relation to any of the numerous branches of sport which we may follow! If the question were, "What was your largest bag?" the answer would be simple. Many people, asking the first question, expect the answer to the second one. It is not, however, on such a calculation that the true sportsman bases his estimate of the best in these matters. Since, no matter whether he be armed with the rod, rifle, or gun, it is not so much on the total number of his quarry slain that his thoughts will afterwards linger, but rather on the display of any particular kind of skill on his own part which may be more than usually called for in the capture of them. For example, in piscatory matters, do we not still remember how, on a certain memorable day in a former season, we have sallied forth determined, for the twentieth time, at least, to capture either of those cunning old rogues of brown trout which are always to be found in their same old haunts, and are such old friends that they are generally known to us and others by their respective names of Tom, Dick, or Harry ;



"STEADY, BOATMAN!"

how they have repeatedly refused our polite invitations with that most enticing dry fly, placed day after day a little above their noses? Here it is received with the same calm indifference by Tom or Dick in turn, and we almost think at last that we can see a smile on the face of the fish as he politely says, "No, thank you," accompanied by the slightest turn of his head at the fly. Simply this, and nothing more. Well, too, we remember how on the day in question, after prospecting the usual spots, just at the tail of

the patch of weeds, or that little back eddy near the head of the pool, where our respective friends lie, they are all seen in due course rising with persistent regularity at the first rise of the olive dun which we have yet seen on the water. Other fish there are, and plenty of them, also rising within sight, and possibly some of them larger than our old acquaintances, some of them new arrivals from other pools. But with these, for the moment, we are not concerned, having a long-standing blood feud with our friends in question. Out comes the inevitable tin box, and soon a perfect imitation of the real fly is rigged up.



CAUGHT IN A STORM.

After a few preliminary casts to exactly gauge the distance, Tom sees the most tempting little dun coming down to him, in exactly the same spot where he took another a few seconds before. Alas, poor Tom! piscine cunning is no match for that, and in a second, "habet!" Shortly afterwards he lies kicking on the bank. Not a whale, you will say, as he fails to pull down the scale at 3lb., but, still, a fish, and a good one.

A quick move to the next spot, and the drama is repeated in the case of Dick, as he also falls a victim to the delusive dun. A visit to Harry results in a determined rise, a quick strike, the latter, perhaps, being a trifle premature, and after a heavy plunge and a roll he is off. Just pricked in the nose. Down he goes to the bottom of the pool, sulky, and more cunning than ever, to test our skill on some future occasion. Although other fish are still rising, it is enough, for have we not caught two fish with a total weight of 5½lb., both of which have repeatedly defeated the efforts of ourself and better men on many former occasions? It is true we have several times taken more than four times the weight of fish in a few hours on the same river, but, nevertheless, this remains in our memory as the best day's sport in that month.

Comparisons are odious, and to compare our best days spent on a salmon river with those on a trout stream is no easy matter. It is a case of *chacun à son goût*, and each sport in turn is generally pronounced the best whilst actually taking part in it. When looking back on many happy days spent amongst the salmon, one in particular returns to the writer's memory. On this occasion he found himself the sole occupant of what is to-day one of the best beats on one of the most celebrated rivers in Norway. Here the extent of water afforded ample fishing for three rods; but, alas! the greater portion of it was harling water, and this is a form of fishing which lacks a deal of charm for one who loves the fly. Nevertheless, the water contained a certain celebrated rock, of considerable size, which stood sheer in mid-stream. On either side of this the water, being parted by the rock, rushed down for some distance in a succession of rapids. Previous experiments had proved that casting from this rock, and from a boat held near these rapids, would yield a certain number of rises to the fly. As the whole of this water could be covered in half-an-hour's fishing, the mode of procedure adopted on this particular day was to cast the rapids at intervals of an hour, and to pass away the intervening time with a little quiet harling. Ten o'clock in the morning saw our boat in position at the head of the rapids. A 5/0 Dusty Miller was requisitioned, and, after a few minutes' casting, the reward was that familiar swirl and silvery flash in the rapids, as a clean-run fish of 14lb. hurled itself at the fly and ran many yards of line off the reel in its first mad rush down the heavy water. Fish of this size not being considered big on that water, he was soon hauled out on the rock *sans cérémonie*, to be shortly followed there by a grilse of 5lb. One more heavy pull in the fast water was the result of our first half-hour's casting. Next followed the inevitable harling, but to relieve the monotony of this the fly was worked meanwhile on a long line, holding the rod in the hand. Here, again, we were rewarded with another fine rise at the fly; result, a fish of 20lb., and shortly afterwards one more of 15lb. on the spoon. Another return to the rapids furnished a single sea-trout of 4lb. By this time, as the sun was bright and warm overhead, it was decided to give the water a

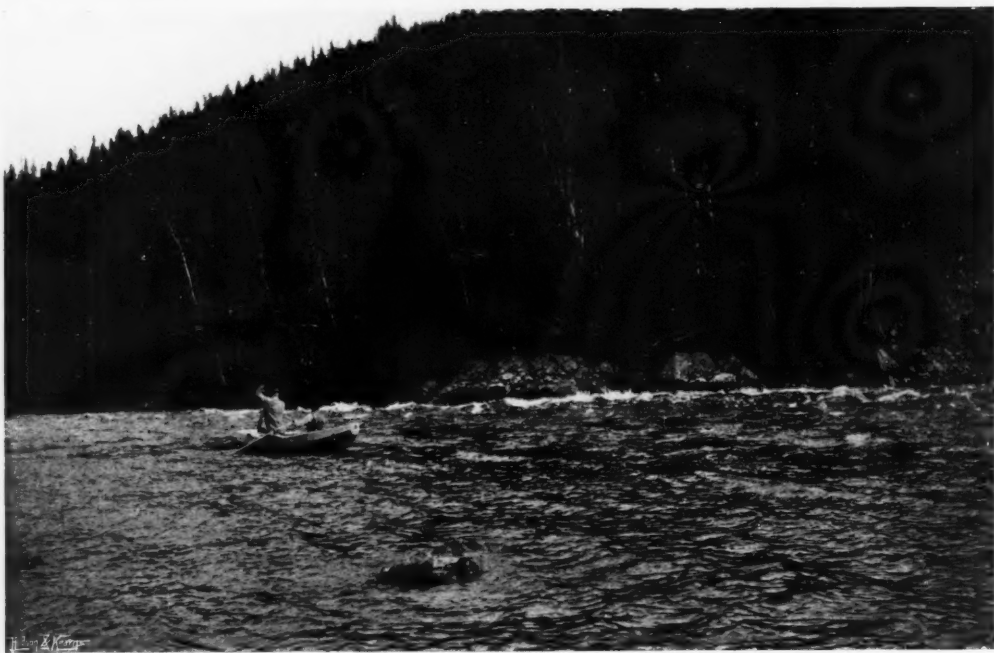
rest for two or three hours during the heat of the day, and a halt was called for refreshments. The result of 54lb. of fish in two hours and a-half before lunch was satisfactory, but, as it turned out, better luck was to follow. Knowing that the limits of human endurance are found even in good Norwegian boatmen, it was decided to husband the men's resources as much as possible for a long spell during the cool of the evening. In the



SHOOTING A RAPID.

afternoon, starting once more at the rapids, by a curious coincidence the Dusty Miller accounted for another fish of 14lb. in almost identically the same place as the fish of similar weight had been caught in the morning. The loss of another grilse, or sea-trout, was the best we could do this time in the remainder of the casting water.

The next move was for a somewhat longer spell of harling. Here, again, a good fish first took the fly, and, after leading us a merry dance, was found to pull down the scales at 23lb. Shortly afterwards the reel on the harling-rod began and continued to scream in the most alarming manner. It seemed as if it would never stop; but, fortunately, there was on the reel some 200yds. of good line. It appeared that a veritable whale had at last taken the spoon. Anxious looks were cast far down the stream, to see what kind of monster might jump if the fish broke water. But, as often happens, our eyes were turned in the wrong direction, for, a second later, the familiar splash of a fish was heard as it hit the water, having jumped nearly 150yds. above the boat. Nothing was visible save the big swirl on the surface of the smooth water where the fish had disappeared. Still we were at a loss to know what was on the end of the line. Fully twenty minutes were occupied by the fish in making wild rushes all over the river, and never once jumping again. But the end was not far off, and our surprise and disappointment were great when the result of a good stroke with the gaff revealed a nice hen-fish of 17lb., foul-hooked in the tail. Some time then being spent without a touch, and as the evening was far advanced—although there was no fear of a failing light, since the sun practically never sets at this period of the year in that region—a move was made for a final attempt at the rapids. A quarter of an hour being spent in vain with the fly, as a last resource we gave a deep pool in the rapids a trial with a small silver spoon. Very soon a heavy pull, followed by a short rush, and then the quickly repeated short tugs on the line, announced the fact that a fish was well hooked, and viciously shaking its head to try to get rid of the hooks. Then ensued an anxious period as the fish began slowly boring up stream against very heavy water, and all attempts on our part, aided by the assistance of a very powerful rod, failed to turn its head down stream. Everything pointed to the fact that we had at last got hold of a good one. Half-an-hour spent



A GOOD SALMON CAST.

in a somewhat slow but protracted struggle saw the gaff firm in a magnificent fish, which turned the scales at a little less than 40lb. This fish again was far short of a record weight for the river, but it was sufficient to please us late in the evening. The total catch of fish for the day was 151lb. in weight, and the fact

that many of them were caught casting, and on the fly, in a place where for ages past this form of fishing had been regarded as useless, lent an additional charm to the sport, and enables the writer to still class it amongst other of his best days.

C. E. RADCLYFFE.

THE MOUNTAIN-TARN.

BY FIONA MACLEOD.

ISOLATED, in one of the wildest and loneliest mountain-regions of the Highlands of Ross, I know a hill-tarn so rarely visited that one might almost say the shadow of man does not fall across its brown water from year's end to year's end. It lies on the summit of a vast barren hill, its cradle being the hollow of a crater. Seven mountains encircle Maoldhu from north, south, east, and west. One of these is split like a hayfork, and that is why it is called in Gaelic the Prong of Fionn. Another, whose furrowed brows are dark with the memorial rheum of the Atlantic, is called the Organ of Oisín, because at a height of about 2,000ft. it shows on its haggard front a black colonnade of basalt, where all the winds of the west make a wild and desolate music. I have heard its lamentation falling across the hill-solitudes and down through the mountain-glens with a sound as of a myriad confused sobs and cries, a sound that is now a forlorn ecstasy and now the voice of the abyss and of immeasurable desolation. Another, that on the east, is an inscalable cone, from whose crest, when sunrise flames the serrated crags into a crown of burning bronze, the golden eagle sways like a slow-rising and slow-falling meteor. All day, save for a brief hour at noon, shadow dwells about its knees, and never lifts from the dark grassy lochan at its feet. It is called Maol Athair-Uaibhreach, the Hill of the Haughty Father: I know not why. "The Haughty Father" is a Gaelic analogue for the Prince of Darkness—son of Saturn, as he is called in an old poem: "God's Elder Brother," as he is named in a legend that I have met or heard of once only—a legend that He was God of this world before "Mac Greinne" (lit.: Son of the Sun) triumphed over him, and drove him out of the East and out of the South, leaving him only in the West and in the North two ancient forgotten cities of the moon, that in the West below the thunder of grey seas and that in the North under the last shaken auroras of the Pole.

It is not easy to reach this tarn of Maoldhu even when the hillways are known. The mountain-flanks have so vast a sweep, with such wide tracts of barren declivity, where the loose stones and boulders seem to hang in the air like a grey suspended fruit, though the first tempest will set them rolling in avalanche; there are so many hidden ravines, and sudden precipices that lean beneath tangled brows like smooth appalling faces; on the eastern slopes the mountain-sheep cannot climb more than halfway; on the south and west the wailing curlews are in continual flight above wide unfrontiered reaches of peat-bog and quaking morass; so many crags lead abruptly to long shelving ledges shelterless and slippery as ice, and twice an abyss of a thousand feet falls sheer from loose rock covered by

treacherous heather for a yard or more beyond the last gnarled, twisted roots.

But, when it is once reached, is there any solitude in the world more solitary than here. The tarn, or lochan rather—for if it is not wide enough to be called a loch it is larger than the ordinary tarn one is familiar with on high moorlands and among the hills—has no outlook save to the lonely reach of sky just above it. A serrated crest of herbless and lifeless precipice circles it. On the lower slopes a rough grass grows, and here and there a little bog-myrtle may be seen. At one end a small dishevelled array of reed disputes the water-edge, in thin, straggling, disconsolate lines. There is nothing else. Sometimes the ptarmigan will whirr across it, though they do not love crossing water. Sometimes the shadow of an eagle's wing darkens the already obscure depths. But the mountain-sheep never reach this height, and even the red deer do not come here to drink these still, brown waters: "One sees no antlers where the heather ceases," as the shepherds say. The clouds rise above the crests



G. P. Abraham.

"THERE'S MIST ON THE MOUNTAIN."

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of the west and pass beyond the crests of the east: snow, the steel-blue sleet, the grey rains, sweep past overhead. In summer, a vast cumulus will sometimes for hours overlean the barren crater and fill the tarn with a snowy wonderland and soft abysses of rose and violet: sometimes a deep, cloudless azure will transmute it to a still flame of unruffled, shadowless blue. At night, when it is not a pit of darkness to which the upper

than they I saw a circling hawk and three ravens flying slowly against the wind. Then came the unpeopled wilderness, or so it seemed till I heard the wail of a solitary curlew (that spirit of the waste, for whom no boggy moors lie too low and desolate, for whom no mountain-ranges are too high and wild and solitary), and once, twice, and again in harsh response but faint against the wind, the barking of a hill-fox and its mate. All life had ceased,

I thought, after that, save an eagle which in a tireless monotony swung round and round the vast summit of Maoldhu. But suddenly, perhaps a hundred feet above me, six or seven ptarmigan rose with a whirr, made a long sailing sweep, and settled (slidingly and gradually as flounders in shallow water among grey pebbles and obscuring sand-furrows) among the lichened boulders and loose disarray of speckled granite and dark and grey basalt and trap—an ideal cover, for even a keen following gaze could not discern the living from the inanimate.

Truly the eagle, the hill-fox, and the ptarmigan are "the eldest children of the hill." The stag may climb thus high too at times, for outlook, or for the intoxication of desolation and of illimitable vastness; sometimes the hawks soar over the wilderness; even the mountain-hares sometimes reach and race

desperately across these high arid wastes. But these all come as men in forlorn and lonely lands climb the grey uninhabitable mountains beyond them, seeking to know that which they cannot see beneath, seeking often for they know not what. They are not dwellers there. The stag, that mountain-lover, cannot inhabit waste rock; the red grouse would perish where the ptarmigan thrives and is content.

How little has been written about these birds of the mountain-brow. What poetry is in their name, for those who know the hills. They dwell higher than the highest June-flight of the tireless swift, higher than the last reaches of the sunrise-leaping larks. Cities might crumble away in pale clouds of dust, floods might overwhelm every lowland, great fires might devour the forests and the red insatiable myriad of flame lap up the



H. Bell.

DESOLATION.

Copyright

darkness is twilight, it will hold many stars. For three hours Arcturus will pulsate in it like a white flame. Other planets will rise, and other stars. Their silver feet tread the depths in silence. Sometimes the moon thrusts long yellow lances down into its brooding heart, or will lie on its breast like the curled horn of the honeysuckle, or, in autumn, like a floating shell filled with fires of phosphorescence. Sunset never burns there, though sometimes the flush of the afterglow descends as on soft impalpable wings from the zenith. At dawn, in midsummer, long scarlet lines will drift from its midmost to the south and west, like blood-stained shafts and battle-spears of a defeated aerial host.

Few sounds are heard by that mountain-tarn. The travelling cloud lets fall no echo of its fierce frost-crashing shards. Dawn and noon and dusk are quiet-footed as mist. The stars march in silence. The springing Northern Lights dance in swift fantastic flame, but are voiceless as the leaping shadows in a wood. Only those other wayfarers of the mountain-summit, tempest, thunder, the streaming wind, the snow coming with muffled rush out of the north, wild rains and whirling sleet, the sharp crackling tread of the hosts of frost: only these break the silence; or, at times, the cries of "the eldest children of the hill" as the mountain-Gael calls the eagle, the hill-fox, and the ptarmigan—the only creatures that have their home above the reach of the heather and in the grey stony wildernesses where only the speckled moss and the lichen thrive.

When I was last at this desolate and remote tarn I realised the truth of that hill-saying. After the furthest oaks on Sliabh Gorm, as the ridge to the south-west is called, and up which alone is a practicable if rough and often broken way, came scattered groups and then isolated trees of birch and mountain-ash. Thereafter for a long way the heather climbed. Then it gave way more and more to bracken. In turn the bracken broke like the last faint surf against huge boulders and waste stony places. The grouse called far below. The last deer were browsing along their extreme pastures, some five hundred to eight hundred feet below the precipitous bastions of Maoldhu. Higher



H. Bell.

WILD AND SWEET.

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last high frontiers of bracken and climbing heather, and the ptarmigan would know nothing of it, would not care. Their grey home would be inviolate. No tempest can drive them forth. Even the dense snows of January do not starve them out. Do they not mock them by then taking the whiteness of the snow for their own? They have nothing to fear save the coming of a black frost so prolonged and deathly that even the

sunfire in the eagle's blood grows chill, and the great pinions dare no more face the icy polar breath. "They'll be the last things alive when the world is cold," said an old gillie to me, speaking of these storm-swept lichen-fed children of the upper wild.

The same old gillie once saw a strange sight at my mountain-tarn. He had when a youth climbed Maoldhu to its summit in midwinter, because of a challenge that he could not do what no other had ever done at that season. He started before dawn, but did not reach the lochan till a red fire of sunset flared along the crests. The tarn was frozen deep, and for all the pale light that dwelled upon it was black as basalt, for a noon-tempest had swept its surface clear of snow. At first he thought small motionless icebergs lay in it, but wondered at their symmetrical circle. He descended as far as he dared, and saw that seven wild-swans were frozen on the tarn's face. They had got there to rest, no doubt: but a fierce cold had numbed them, and an intense frost of death had suddenly transfixed each as they swam slowly circlewise as is their wont. They may have been there for days, perhaps for weeks. A month later the gillie

pretty clear yellow and fragrant *Hemerocallis flava*; the others, or, at least, the majority of them, are too strong, and less free than this cheery kind, which seems to live anywhere. It is fairly cheap, and comes up year after year with charming persistency, increasing in bulk as time passes on. The leaves are quite grassy, and in themselves have a certain beauty; but it is the yellow flowers that appear above them to which we look forward when June meets July. Then they appear in quick succession, enjoying but a brief life individually, though this is not noticed in the onward rash of sweet-smelling buds. We have just lined a long, shady walk with this and also the Spanish Bluebell (*Scilla campanulata*), which may be bought in several colourings—rose, pink, deep blue, white, and other shades. It is stronger and taller than the ordinary Bluebell, which may be also recommended, and has the same interesting series of varieties. It is astonishing how these bulbs grow, even in the poorest of soils and shadiest of positions. This is the season to plant.

VALUE OF THE BUSH OR TREE IVIES.

It should be more widely recognised that in the finer varieties of the bush or tree Ivies we have some of the most perfect of evergreens. There is a freshness, cheeriness, and distinctness about these shrubs that commends them to all who wish for a permanent feature in the garden of an evergreen



G. P. Abraham.

A LONELY TARN.

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repeated his arduous and dangerous feat. They were still there, motionless, ready for flight as it seemed.

How often in thought I have seen that coronal of white swans above the dark face of that far, solitary tarn: in how many dreams I have listened to the rustle of unloosening wings, and seen seven white phantoms rise cloud-like, and like clouds at night drift swiftly into the dark; and heard, as mournful bells through the solitudes of sleep, the *honk-honk* of the wild-swans traversing the obscure forgotten ways to the secret country beyond sleep and dreams and silence.

IN THE GARDEN.

DAY LILIES AND BLUEBELLS FOR SHADY SPOTS.

WE were recently asked to name a set of bulbous plants which would be satisfactory in a shady border, backed by Laurel. This is, of course, not an ideal spot for anything. There is the shade, and the hungry shrubs behind; and only those with experience of Laurel know how ravenous it is, sending roots hither and thither, and sucking up all natural nutriment. Two races of bulbs, however, may be recommended, one the Day Lilies and the other the Bluebells. Of the former, we prefer the

character without a fear of introducing a dull and monotonous effect. The day will come, and, let us hope, soon, when diverse forms of Ivy will be much sought for, and why?—because of their manifold merits. We enjoy them as groups on the margin of the lawn, or in front of existing shrubberies; and it should be remembered that the green varieties are of the greatest use for planting under trees and in smoky towns. The gardener near a great city, such as Birmingham or London, is frequently perplexed as to the plants to select for their growth under such conditions. A hundred things that succeed elsewhere fail miserably; but not the Ivies, which even seem to enjoy their sooty environment. When September merges towards October the little balls of flowers appear, and every observer of the English hedgerow when all else is bare knows the sweet scent and colouring of the flowers of the Ivy, the one winter flower-picture to carry one's thoughts to the sunny time of spring. Bush Ivies may be planted now with perfect safety. The best selection comprises the following, all of which we have seen in large groups in Messrs. Fisher, Son, and Sibray's nursery at Handsworth, Sheffield, where these shrubs receive special attention. Of the green varieties none is daintier than *Amurensis*, which we have had occasion to describe before; *Canariensis*, *Rhomboidea obovata*, *Taurica*, and the yellow-berried variety with bright golden fruit which shines in the winter sunlight. The golden-leaved forms have their foliage splashed and blotched with yellow of various shades, and one of the best is *Gold Blotched*, a name that indicates the character of the leaf-colouring; *Palmata aurea*, and *Spectabilis aurea*.

RANDOM NOTES.

Destroying Aphides.—A leaflet lately issued by the Board of Agriculture deals with the destruction of aphides, and gives the following information: "Remedies—Aphides can easily be destroyed by spraying the affected plants with a soft-soap wash. This is made by dissolving from 6lb. to 10lb. of soft soap in 100 gallons of soft water. The soft soap blocks up the breathing pores of the plant-lice, and so kills them. Quassia is sometimes added; this acts as an astringent to the leafage, and cleans it of the honey-dew and excreta formed by the aphides. For black-fly on Cherry, and for all those that produce a copious flow of honey-dew, it is a most useful ingredient. The quassia chips are boiled, and the extract added to the soft-soap wash; 6 lb. to 8 lb. of chips are required to every 100 gallons of wash. Paraffin emulsion, an excellent spray against aphides, is necessary for some kinds, as woolly aphis, which may also be attacked in winter by caustic alkali wash. For those which attack the root it is best to use bisulphide of carbon injected into the soil, a quarter of an ounce to every four square yards. Care must be taken with this substance, which is both poisonous and inflammable. The vapour of bisulphide of carbon liquid, used in the bee-keepers' 'smoker,' is said to be a very good remedy for green-fly, and does not injure the most delicate flowers. In all cases the aphides must be attacked as soon as an invasion shows itself, especially when the species of aphis has the habit, like the Plum aphis, of curling up the leaves, and so of protecting itself. Natural checks—Several insects prey upon aphides, and should be encouraged. The chief of these are ladybirds and their larvæ (Coccinellidæ); hover-fly maggots, which are the larvæ of the Syrphidæ; the larvæ of the lace-wing or golden-eye flies; and various minute hymenopterous parasites (Chalcididæ), which lay their eggs in the bodies of the aphides, and whose maggots destroy them. Man cannot, however, rely solely on the services of these beneficial creatures, but must check the increase of the aphides by washes as soon as they appear upon his plants."

Crimson and Scarlet Roses in Autumn.—Looking through a large collection of Roses recently, we made note of the most beautiful in shades of crimson and scarlet. All the following are excellent for massing, and flower with exceptional freedom during the autumn months: Grüss an Teplitz, Princesse de Sagan, Marquise de Salisbury, Papa Gontier, Cramoisie Supérieure, Fabvier, Fellenberg, Ma Tulipe, Souv. de Thérèse Levet, Perle des Rouges, Louis van Houtte, A. K. Williams, Ulrich Brunner, Gloire des Rosomanes, Francis Dubrieul, Dr. Andry, Comte Raimbaud, and Alfred Colomb. A few of these belong to the Hybrid Perpetual race, but they are mentioned because of their autumn flowering, a feature not characteristic of the race. The purest scarlet Rose is Princesse de Sagan, but its growth is not very satisfactory; at least, that is the experience gained in a Buckinghamshire garden. Grüss an Teplitz is the safest of all Roses; its flowers are pure crimson, deliciously fragrant, and appear in abundance, the colour gaining in richness against the purplish foliage. Cramoisie Supérieure and Fabvier are China Roses, and very brilliant in colouring.

Renewing Mixed Borders.—Hardy perennial plants generally remain in vigorous health about four years. Of course, this must be only regarded as a general rule, as some enjoy a shorter and others a longer life of usefulness. When the fourth or fifth year has been passed, the growth becomes weakly and flowerless, and it is time to fill their places with young tufts. Much may be done by judicious top-dressing of the soil; but if there is an air of exhaustion about the border, at this season lift the clumps, retaining the strong outside pieces for replanting. The soil should be taken out to the depth of 12 in., and replaced with a quite fresh material, to which well-decayed manure has been added. Fork over carefully between the plants that are not to be lifted, and mulch the surface 2 in. thick with good loam, if possible, mixed with manure.

A LOTOS-LAND.

HIDDEN among the wooded hills of South Devon, sheltered and sunny, there lies a little Lotos-land near the sea. Bolt Head stretches out a long arm to protect it; the waters of its harbour ripple against its walls and pass on their way inland for four miles or so; trees cling round it, hiding the houses and hanging their



R. de S. Stawell.

SALCOMBE HARBOUR.

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branches over the sea after the pretty fashion of Devonshire. Those who believe that the sea was intended by Nature to be edged with Marine Parades and populous beaches, with bands and niggers at short intervals, must not go to Salcombe. The dear little fishing-town wins hearts by other means than these—by its quaint, narrow streets and weed-stained walls, its gay sails reflected in a sea of marvellous green, its sunny rocks and quiet havens.

Salcombe is six miles from Kingsbridge Station, and it is doubtless those six miles that save it from desecration by Saturday excursions and bad music. Bicyclists shun it, too, for it leads to nowhere and the road is preposterously hilly. The country round about it is treeless and discouraging; our hearts sink a little as we drive from Kingsbridge between the imprisoning hedges of Devonshire. It seems unlikely that anything really pretty can await us. Then we reach the edge of the hill, and suddenly the green sea shines below us, lapping upon the yellow sands of the little creeks; wooded slopes drop steeply down to the rocks that fringe the shore, and beyond them is the blue mass of Bolt Head. Salcombe lies at our feet, clinging to the hillside, a tiny town of steep streets and shipwrights' yards and picturesque quays. Very snugly it lies in



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WATERHEAD, SALCOMBE.

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SALCOMBE CASTLE AND BOLT HEAD.

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its sheltered estuary, where the yachts find safe anchorage in all weathers, and add so much to its charm.

Little Salcombe, unpretentious as it is, is not unconnected with history and literature. There was an evening, not very many years ago, when, at the hour of twilight, a yacht put out to sea over the bar of Salcombe Harbour, while the sound of the evening bell came clearly across the water. To the right the dark headland loomed high; up the estuary the lights of Salcombe were beginning to shine out one by one through the dusk. An inspiring scene for a poet, truly, and to it we owe the lovely lyric "Crossing the Bar," in which Tennyson has given to us for ever the thoughts that came to him that evening as he crossed Salcombe Bar in the Sunbeam. He had been visiting the historian, Froude, at his pretty gabled house, which stands in a half-tropical garden between Salcombe and Bolt Head. Here Froude lived for some years, delighting in his orange trees and his flowers, and in the mildness of the sunny winter. It was here that he died, and his grave is one of those that fleck the hillside with white just above Salcombe town.

Quite near to the house of the historian is a spot where once on a time some history was made. The very scanty ruins of Salcombe Castle stand on a rock which is nearly circled by the sea, a rock so small and so irregular that one wonders how any kind of castle ever found a footing there. A very determined footing it had, however, for it was the last Devon fortress to hold for the King in the Civil War; and so stoutly did it defend itself during a four months' siege by Cromwell's soldiers, that its commander, Sir Edmund Fortescue, was allowed, with his garrison, to march out with the honours of war. It is said that the key of the castle is in the possession of his descendants to this day.

Except for this ruin—a round tower and a few fragments of masonry—Salcombe has no special attractions for the antiquary. It is rather the artist to whom it is a happy hunting ground; and

where, big and little, from the dapper yacht to the wave-worn barge.

Up and up he may sail into the heart of the land—up South Pool Creek, to the thatched farmstead that stands with its feet nearly in the water at Gullet; up to the picturesque village of South Pool itself, or past the pretty houses of Goodshelter to the old mill at Waterhead and the rickety wooden boathouse beside it. Or, if he loves the sea as an Englishman should, he may leave the sheltered harbour and adventure himself on the



R. de S. Stawell.

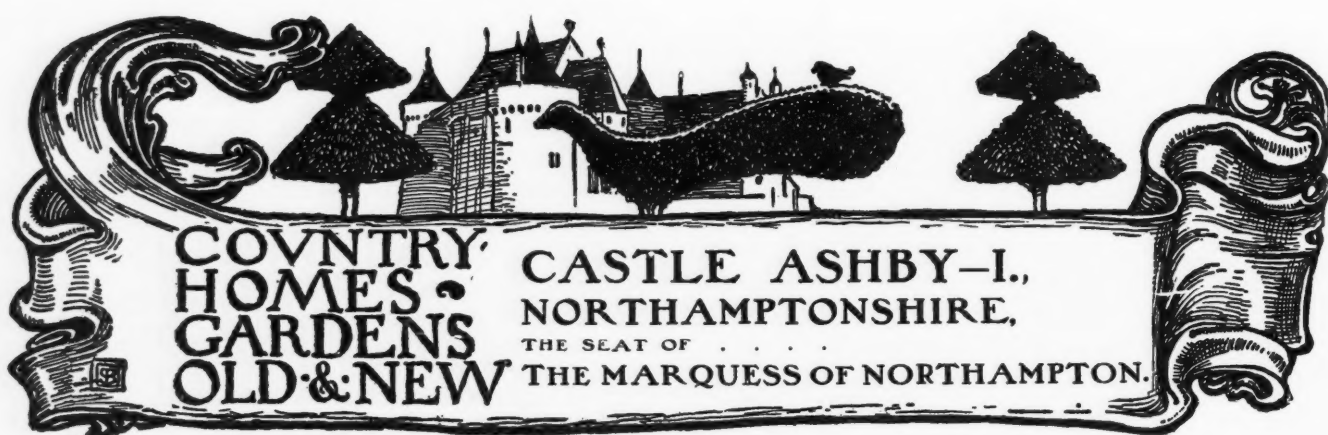
SOUTH POOL CREEK FROM GULLET.

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waves that will bring him to Hope, and Thurstlestone, and Bantham.

Salcombe is, in short, not an ideal place for the cyclist or the motorist who is nothing else, nor for small children; and for the golfer it is not a place at all. But it smiles upon all who love beauty or boats, upon the bather and the walker, the painter and the photographer, and such as seek to catch fish. And in the winter it smiles still.

MAUD M. STAWELL.



CASTLE ASHBY is a vast place "in all dimensions." It is also beautiful and impressive. But its size and the sustained sense of space conveyed not only by the building, but by every part of the great domain surrounding it, are the first clear impressions that strike the visitor. Often in a flat and open country some site, which would not be remarked for height or especially commanding elsewhere, dominates a great area of country, and seems made and intended by Nature for a castle or a palace, or, perhaps, for the foundation of some great city. Belvoir is an example of the former in the northern Midlands, Castle Ashby is its counterpart in the southern. The valley of the Nene, with its quiet river winding through wide, green meadows and between low, long slopes of fertile lands, passes the castle at no great distance below Northampton, on its way to Oundle, and the aisles and towers of Peterborough, and thence to the fen and the shallow Eastern Sea. It is a fertile, quietly-beautiful country, as much the "home of ancient peace" as any in England. Not far off is Ecton, whence Franklin sprang, and further down the valley is Lilford Hall, one of the most ambitious of the Tudor-Italian houses of John of Padua, but better known to many readers as the home of that excellent naturalist and most kindly of men the late Lord Lilford, whose eagles, kites, and cranes are still preserved there in comfortable captivity. But at Castle Ashby the sides of this

broad and shallow valley run into something approaching to steepness, until in the centre of an immense park, and ringed by a chain of narrow winding lakes and pools, a green escarpment appears like a natural terrace, on which rises the long façade, which is, in fact, but one side of a great parallelogram, of the north front of Castle Ashby.

The great house is built of a singularly pleasing warm, yellowish stone, growing only more warm and beautiful in tint with age, but weathering so gradually that the pilasters and panels added by Inigo Jones hardly show the mark of time. The castle, as a whole, looks so much part of the natural order of the whole conception and site, that it is almost impossible to consider the latter apart from the building which it carries. But if by an effort of detachment this is achieved, it will be seen that the high platform of perhaps a score of acres, occupied mainly by buildings, terraces, and formal gardens, must always have dominated the whole of the surrounding country. It is not merely that the eye carries forward from the terraces across and far beyond and up and down the valley, and "lends long view to distant lands." From the south the eye sees far back into Northamptonshire, towards what was formerly the wild country of Salcey Forest and of Yardley Chase, which was the ancient sporting ground of the lords of Castle Ashby. A few half-wild deer are still left in this domain. The present deer park was only enclosed in 1765, these "beasts of the chace" having previously

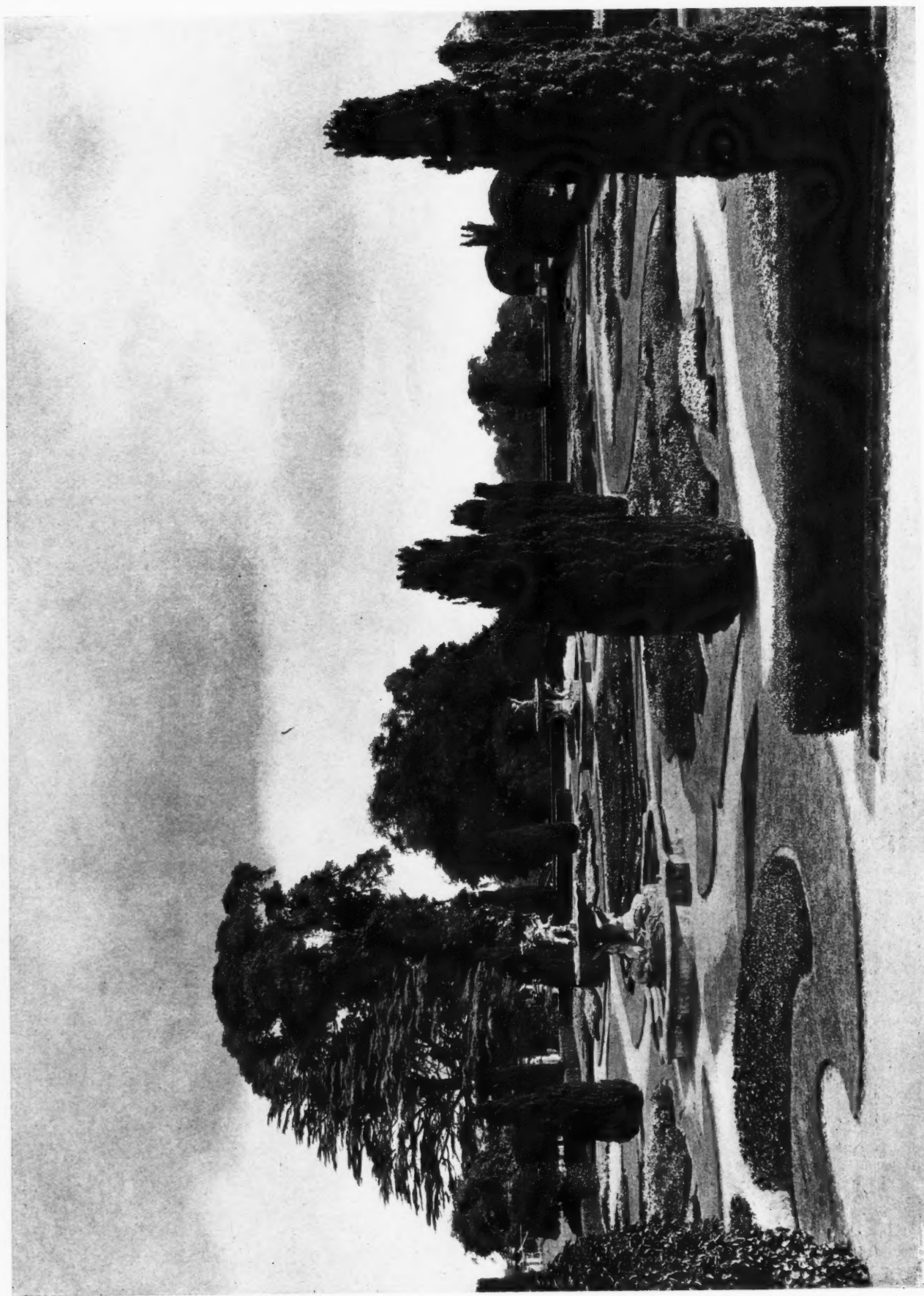




THE SOUTH ENTRANCE.

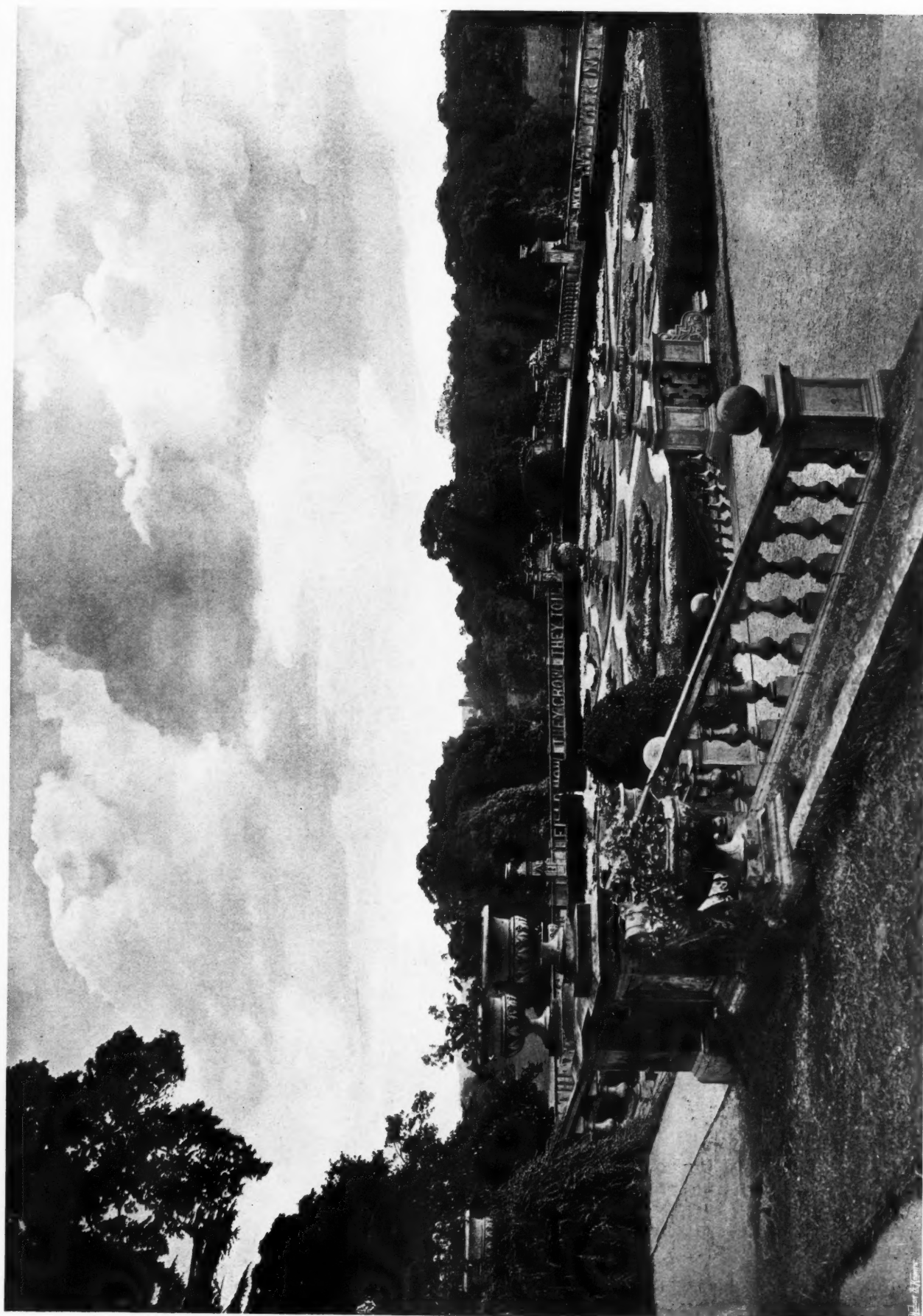
"COUNTRY LIFE."

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FROM THE SOUTH TERRACE.



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE SOUTH GARDEN.

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roamed at large in their ancient haunt. The chase is full of green rides and thickets; but most of the natural woodland has disappeared, and its place is now taken by artificially-planted timber. Here and there the old "lawns" still remain, as in the New Forest, and on them the trunks of ancient and gigantic oaks. Three of these are, in a sense, famous, for they inspired Cowper's ode to the "Yardley Oak." Olney, in the valley of the Ouse, where the poet lived, was scarcely more than three miles distant

from the Chase, and the largest of the three trees, the trunk of which is some 30ft. round a yard from the surface of the turf in which it is set, is, and was, quite impressive enough to inspire a much better poem than that which Cowper indited to it. The whole area of this chase is ancient forest ground, and gives some idea of the condition of Old England in the Plantagenet days, of which, like Whittlebury Forest in the same county, it is a rather unexpected survival.

Approached from the side of the distant river, the park appears unusually large, while the scattered trees of various kinds and ages, from oaks to giant crab-apples, the mixed timber, and huge black poplars by the chains of lakes, break the slopes and valleys pleasantly enough. But, looking southwards, on the other side of the castle, the fact at once impresses itself that this is one of the greatest demesnes—using the word as standing for park, gardens, and buildings—in this country, ranking with Blenheim, Chatsworth, Longleat, Houghton, or Trentham. An avenue—not a mere narrow ride between close-set lines of trees, but a wide green space, with a road up its



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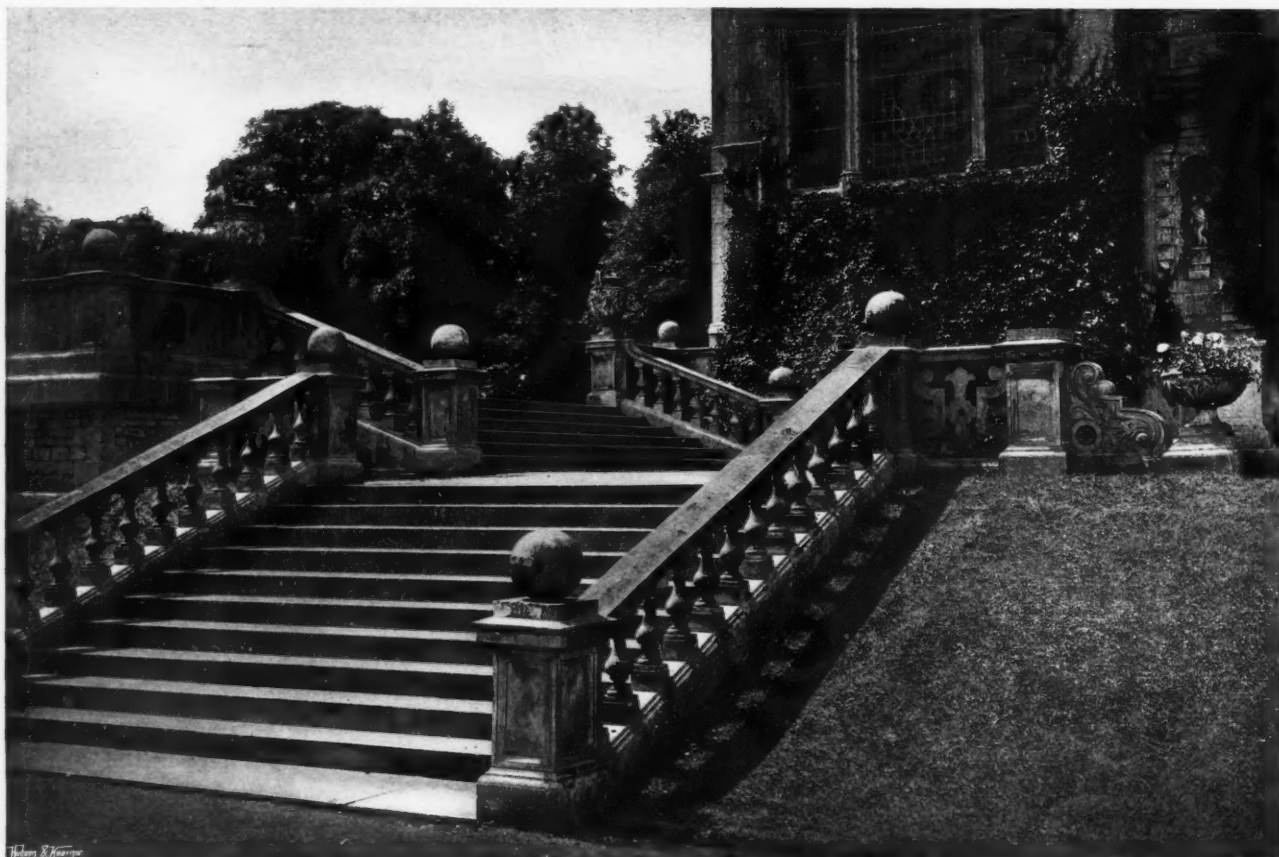
THE EAST GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

centre, and tall timber trees in lines far back on the turf on either side—runs straight away to the chase for three miles from the forecourt. The effect is far more pleasing than that of the Long Walk at Windsor, and the length is also greater. A word should be said as to the chain of lakes and pools surrounding, at some distance, the castle hill, and making a watery ring in the area of park. They are a singularly good example of how an originally somewhat water-

less landscape can be improved. Their banks are most carefully planted, so that when seen from one of the bridges they look much like a typical reach of the Thames. "Capability Brown," who planned a part of them, if not the whole, is said to have exclaimed, in a burst of complacency, as he viewed the effect from one of the bridges, "Thames! Thou wilt never forgive me!"

The south side, with Yardley Chase as the base of the great avenue, which also led from the old main Bedford and Northampton Road, was the point from which all the grand approaches were formerly made to the castle. The railway and the access from that side were only an afterthought. It is on the south side that the great forecourt is, with its splendid Italian gates, its flat lawns, and the front so well "converted" into his cheerful English Palladian by Inigo Jones. The great grassy oblong in front might have been anciently a tilt-yard. Now it forms a cricket-ground, and a very fine one. On the right, looking towards the house, with a very little space dividing it from the forecourt, is the church, to the tower of which some



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THE EAST GARDEN STAIRWAY.

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THE END OF THE EAST TERRACE.

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THE CENTRAL WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

past owner of the castle added an exceedingly effective cupola, which brings its lines well into harmony with the castle. The present marquess caused several of the intervening trees to be cut down, so that the church stands in the same setting of ancient turf with the gardens and terraces, and falls naturally into the general scheme of building and environment. Low spreading plane and chestnut trees link up the precincts of the church with the bright levels of the forecourt and the splendid colouring of the elaborate gardens of the east front. But before going thither, where perhaps the greatest wealth of architectural and of garden beauties is massed, let us look at the double lines, first of the terrace and gates, and then of the south front itself. The terrace and gate-piers, as well as all the other terraces, steps, balustrades, fountains, seats, and arcades of these gardens, are of a bright, warm, creamy terra-cotta, admirably made, and, in spite of all that has been said against the use of this material, perfectly well suited and in keeping with both the castle walls on the one side and the English park, woodlands, and distant line landscape on the other. The whole was built, and the gardens

designed and constructed, by the third marquess, and much of the work bears the date 1865. The design of the gates, which, it will be seen, has nothing whatever in common with the usual form of English ironwork, was that of some workmen of Italy. They were brought from Padua to the place where they now stand. The elaboration of ornament in the gate-piers is not in the least out of place in relation to their light and delicate lines; nor is it amiss to note that the whole of the terra-cotta of these gardens was made in England at the Blashfield Works, near Stamford. Passing through into the forecourt, the first effect which arouses interest is the parapet of the house, the stonework of which, as at Hardwick, is pierced so as to make both a decorative parapet and to spell the words of the verses sacred to all who wish their earthly mansions to endure and their resting-place to be firm and abiding. The builder chose the Latin version, perhaps from a feeling for that grace of congruity which associates the religious feeling of Western Europe with the ancient sway of Rome and her pontiffs. "Nisi dominus Ædificaverit," says the heading of the psalm, and so the builder continued in the Latin. But how

many of the owners and retainers of Castle Ashby must have heard in the church hard by the English version: "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." For two and a-half centuries the solemn monition with which it pleased the original builder and lord of Castle Ashby to crown his stately work had displayed its warning from parapet and turret over the lands where his descendants dwelt. For all those generations they followed its silent monition, and lived wisely and well, and maintained and augmented the glory of their house; and what could they do better, when enlarging its borders, than once more to take up the burden of the ancient text and add other verses to guard the precinct added to the castle walls? On the new parapets around the terraces and the stately garden walls added in 1865 the echo has changed its language, but not its inspiration. Even round the gardens of flowers and the vine-entwined balconies we are bidden to mark the lilies of the field "that they toil not, neither do



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TO THE CHURCH STAIRWAY.

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SOUTH-EAST CORNER OF THE CASTLE.

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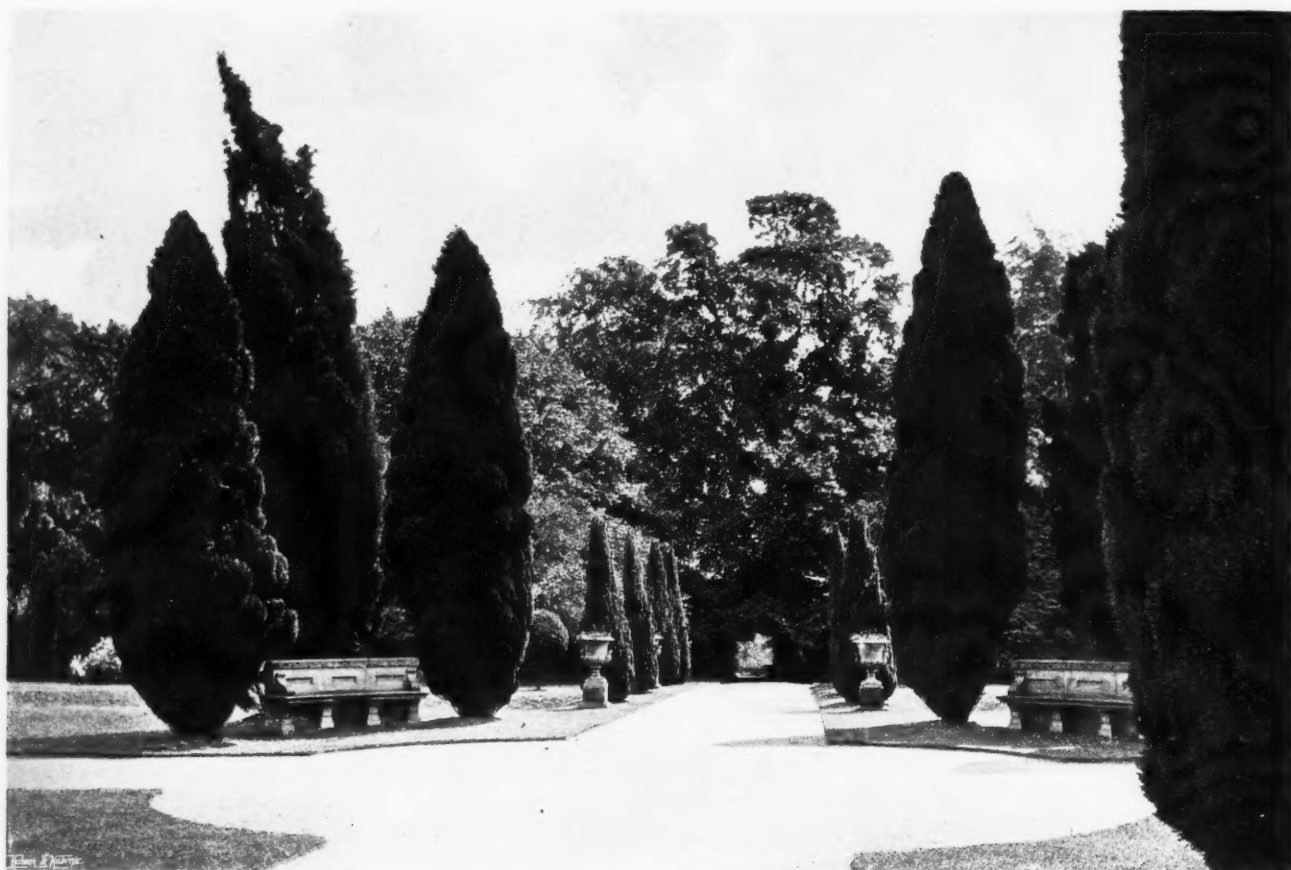
they spin, and that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The very story of the present house, told almost as plainly as words could write it, suggests long continuance and abiding soundness of judgment. There is not a vestige of the original castle or crenellated house of Walter de Langton, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in the days of Edward I., except a well, which has been "recapped" and embodied in the outer wall of the new gardens. Yet a well is at least a symbol of perpetuity. But since the days when Sir William Compton, owner of that ancient house of Compton Wynyates which Lord Northampton still holds and is the despair of modern builders in search of a logical beauty which they may re-create, bought Castle Ashby of the Earl of Kent in the days of Henry VIII., the fortunes of the house have steadily increased, and always with honour. Sir William's son married a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and their son, in the eighth year of Elizabeth, became Baron Compton, and his son and successor was created Earl of Northampton. The first earl built the greater part of the present house, while his son, the second earl, typical of all that was most chivalrous in the Cavalier party, was killed at the battle of Hopton Heath, in 1643, "a loss for which a greater victory had been an unequal recompense." The third earl was

vicissitudes and treacheries, wild revenges, and cold-blooded cruelty. A book like this is very valuable, if only as framing and placing many of the figures of which we have had monographs and biographies, such as the women of the Este family and Catherine Sforza.

Mr. Gardner opens his work with a sketch of the Este family from the fourteenth century, and deals with the political and literary history to the end of the reign of Ercole I. and the opening of that of Alfonso I. In further volumes he proposes to treat of the history of the later dukes, of the painters of the second epoch, of the life and works of Ariosto and of Torquato Tasso, down to the surrender of the duchy to Pope Clement VIII.

The beginning of the fifteenth century in Ferrara found the lordship in the possession of that Niccolò da Este who, himself a man of unbridled lust (he acknowledged between twenty and thirty illegitimate children), yet exacted the extreme penalty for a lapse from virtue of his young wife, Parisina, and his eldest son. Though most of his contemporaries justified his conduct, it is interesting to read the pronouncement of the excellent and enlightened Pope Cæne Sylvio Piccolomini, who says that many hold him to have been cruel to his son and unjust to his wife, from whom he wished to exact more than he gave. "The weaker," says the Pope, "paid the penalty; the potent sinner whom



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THE CROSSWAYS, SOUTH GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

as true to his King, and the Restoration saw the addition of the rank of marquess. Nor must we forget that later Henry Compton, sixth son of the second earl, and then Bishop of London, setting aside all inherited feeling in face of the danger to the liberties of the Church and of his country, was among those leaders of England who signed the invitation to William of Orange to come over and vindicate the freedom of England.

DUKES & POETS OF FERRARA.

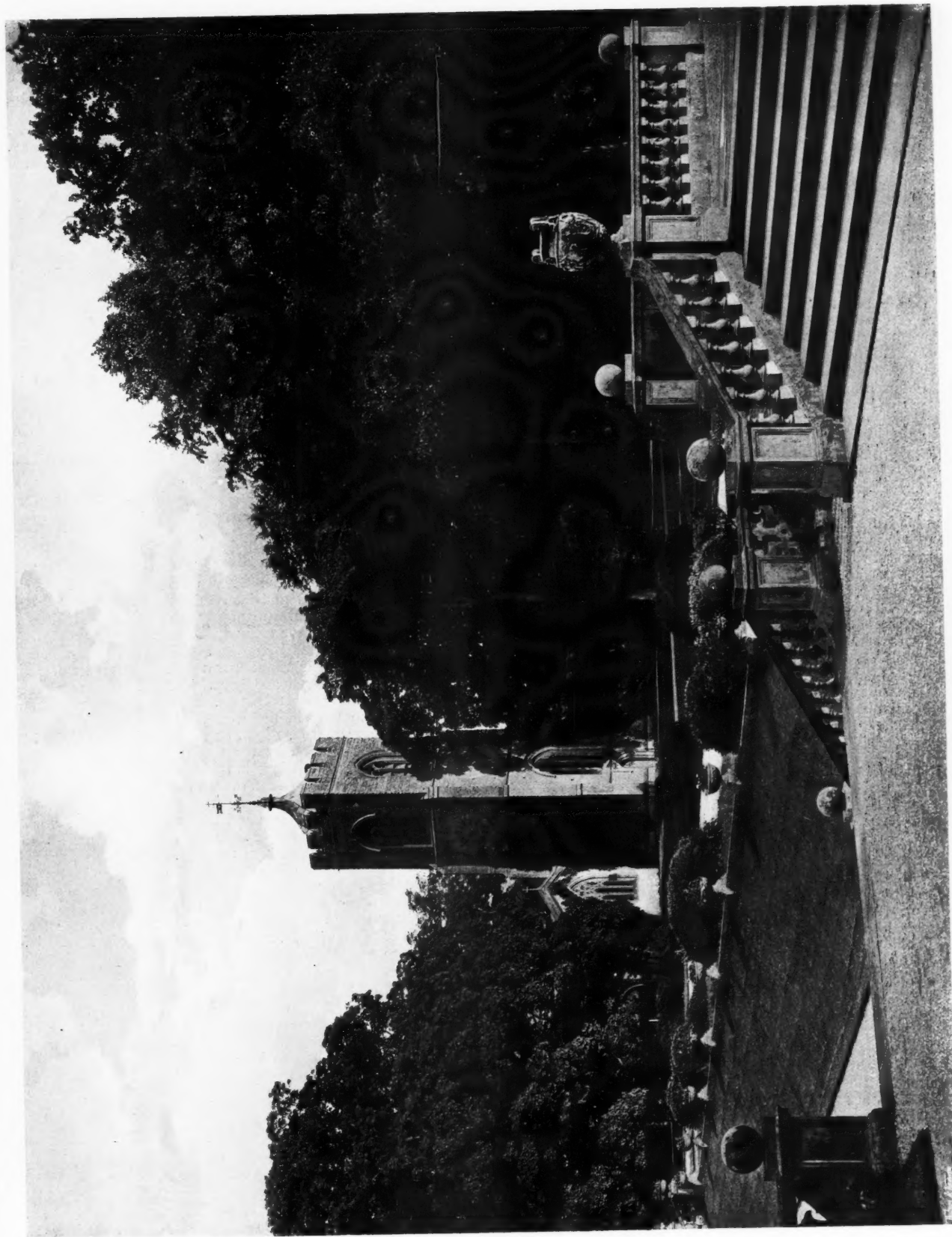
THIS book is a serious contribution to Italian history. It suggests comparison with Dennistonn's "Dukes of Urbino," and if it cannot quite rival the charm of that fascinating work, yet it does to some extent for the House of Este what the other has done for that of Montefeltro. Ferrara, Urbino, and Mantua share with Florence and Milan the distinction of being the great centres of humanising civilisation in the strange and chequered age of the Renaissance; but, unlike the two last, the seats of those three great courts now lie stagnant and half deserted, and in their decay preserve for us the spirit of the past better than the flourishing modern cities. The records of these courts show us a society which is a curious compound of ultra refinement and intellectuality, broken by fierce

the world dared not judge, was reserved for the judgment of God."

The claims of legitimate succession were withheld, and Niccolò, a natural son himself, was succeeded by first one and then another of his natural children, and only at length, after the lapse of many years, by his legitimate son, Ercole.

The two dukes, Leonello and Borso, make a striking contrast, and stand out as types of men of the Italian revival. Their faces are familiar to every student of Italian art. We see the long, refined profile of Leonello on the coins of Pisanello and in Oriolo's portrait in the National Gallery. Leonello was the courtly and scholarly centre of the circle of humanists and *litterati* in Ferrara. "We see them," Mr. Gardner says, "now walking together in the cool of the evening to Belfiori, discussing as they go; now sitting under a great laurel tree in the garden, now meeting in the Corte Vecchia in Leonello's own private apartment, now riding under the stars on a hot summer's night 'to that castle or royal palace, of all in Italy the fairest, in popular speech called Belriguardo';" discussing the classic past, considering subtle points of philosophy and theology, and dismissing the vernacular writers as "those books which, on winter nights, we explain before our wives and children."

Ferrara looks back as to its age of gold to the peaceful



"COUNTRY LIFE"

THE CHURCH AT CASTLE ASHBY.

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reign of this prince and his beloved brother, Duke Borso, by whom he was succeeded, his own illegitimate son being set aside. It was Borso who turned a hunting-lodge into that palace of the Schifanoia, which stands in one of Ferrara's most deserted and grass-grown streets, and in which two frescoed rooms still recall to us the glories of its past. We know the man, simple-hearted, kind, generous, from the portraits of his jovial, sagacious face, "gorgeously attired, serene and gracious," amid his bands of *debonnaire* followers, and the frescoes give us a whole train of pageants of the life of an ideal city of the Renaissance.

The most salient character of Mr. Gardner's book is Ercole I., who at length succeeded his illegitimate brother, and who is a sufficiently impressive example of an enlightened and astute ruler, though it is hardly possible to assent to the proposition that "of all the Italian sovereigns of the Borgia epoch, he is the one sympathetic, almost the only not ignoble figure," when we remember that he numbered among his contemporaries the good Duke Federigo of Urbino and his son Guidobaldi, and Lodovico Sforza, unscrupulous, but supremely interesting; but through his reign of thirty-four years he stands out as a man whose standard of virtue was comparatively high, whose love for his people was real, and who had a strong, if mystic, sense of religion. He married the beautiful Leonora of Arragon, and this was the home in which Isabella and Beatrice d'Este grew to womanhood. In his reign the disastrous war with Venice took place, when the sufferings of the luxurious Ferranese, besieged in their city, were intense. After a peaceful interval of ten years followed the terrible wave of ultramontane invasion. More fortunate than the Duke of Milan, Ercole maintained his position, but with broken health and spirits. He threw himself heart and soul into a remarkable religious movement which about this time culminated in Italy—the revival of the *culte* of St. Catherine of Siena.

Mr. Gardner gives an interesting account, with much new material, of this, and of the Duke's relations with Lucia Brocadelli, a nun of Viterbo, who had received the *stigmata*, and had a great reputation as a mystic. After many struggles with Viterbo, where both religions and inhabitants refused to give up their saintly member, Lucia, who was very anxious to go to Ferrara, at length escaped, hidden in a basket of linen, and was received with the greatest honour in Ferrara, where Ercole built her a convent. Disappointed in his efforts to carry out reforms after Savonarola's bracing methods, he essayed to oppose the corruption in the Church and in society by the revived influence of St. Catherine, but "his Egeria," as Mr. Gardner very happily styles her, was very young and had little of the strong sense and breadth of views which made her patroness so powerful, and gave such a high position to a saintly woman like Osanna of Mantua, Lucia was a type of the ecstatic visionary, and the Duke fell completely under the spiritual guidance of herself and her Order, passing hours in mystical conversation with her, and heaping benefits on her convent, for which, however, there was a good deal of difficulty in obtaining recruits. It throws a curious light on the position of religious women to read of the efforts made to get nuns from Viterbo to come to Ferrara, and of the refusal of the former city to allow them to leave it. The influence of no less a person than Lucrezia Borgia, the wife of Ercole's eldest son, was needed, together with orders from the Pope, and mingled threats and persuasions, before enough nuns could be got together from different convents, all unwilling to part with their saintly inmates. The records of Ferrara are full of the honour paid to the community, the pictures painted for, and the grants made to, it; but the unfortunate Suora Lucia seems to have had no talent for attaching her nuns; she was the object of envy and dislike, and on Ercole's death (she was then only twenty-nine), they turned on her, despoiled her of her authority, and for nearly forty years she suffered a rigorous imprisonment, humiliated in every way, and treated as an impostor, in the convent where her word had been law.

The book is full of remarkable figures, among whom stands out Lucrezia, who came to Ferrara for her third marriage, young, beautiful, and notorious, to live henceforth a model of domestic propriety. The accounts of her splendid entry are minute and graphic, but a less familiar figure is that sinister and typical personage Cardinal Ippolito, Ercole's younger son, a great churchman, an intriguer against the Rovere Pope, a *diplomat*, and man of pleasure. The darkest incident of a dark life was his treatment of his brother Giulio, who rivalled him in the affections of Angela Borgia. The lady told him that Giulio's beautiful eyes were worth more than his whole body. A few days after the Cardinal had his brother waylaid and stood by while his hirelings stabbed Giulio's eyes with their rapiers. Their brother, Duke Alfonso, was deeply enraged at this horrible outrage; but Ippolito contrived, in a letter of consummate hypocrisy, to shield himself, and, after the fashion of the day, his tools were sacrificed, while he patched up a reconciliation with Giulio (who recovered the sight of one eye), and pursued his edifying career as a prince of the Church.

The principal poet of the Herculean age of Ferrara, which only saw the dawn of Ariosto, was Count Matteo Maria Boiardo,

feudal lord of Scandiano and Ercole's governor at Reggio, and we owe Mr. Gardner a debt of gratitude for his able review of his career and work. His poems are excellent examples of the stories in verse that served to amuse and while the time for the princes and ladies of the early Renaissance. He paints the gardens and palaces that Cosmo Tura and Cossa give us in fresco, he treats of paladins and damsels, of the legends of Charlemagne and the Knights of King Arthur, and "the fair love that knights bore to their sovereign ladies in the olden time"—all with the frankly cynical attitude towards women and sexual morality, and the absence of all serious purpose, characteristic of his surroundings. One of his most delightful characters is the young English paladin Astolfo, whose unassuming courage, good humour, and generosity seem to have been typical then, as now, of a plucky young Briton.

Among the examples given of the lyrics of the day, one which stands alone in its fire and pathos is the sonnet which came fresh from the despairing heart of a woman, Barbara Torelli, whose young husband was murdered a fortnight after marriage, with the cognisance, if not at the instigation, of Duke Alfonso. None other dared to speak their suspicion, justice was powerless, but the hapless widow does not hesitate, "daring and fearless," to indicate that she knows whence came the blow. It begins:

"Spenta è d'Amor la face, il dardo è rotto
E l'arco e la faretra e ogni sua possa,
Poi ch'ha Morte crudel la piante scossa
A la cui ombra cheta io dormia sotto."

("Quenched is Love's torch, his arrow is broken, and his bow and quiver and all his power, since cruel Death has shaken the tree, beneath whose quiet shadow I slept.")

And in the tragedy of its occasion and the charm of its language is an expression in brief of the mingled characteristics of the Italian court of the *cinque-cento*.

Mr. Gardner's book gives definite shape and sequence to one more section of Italian history, and his next volume will be waited for with interest.

E. MARCH PHILLIPPS.

FROM THE FARMS.

THE UNITED STATES WHEAT SUPPLY.

A SINGULAR and instructive fact is brought out by the recent figures regarding the position of United States wheat in the English markets. In an official leaflet the United States statisticians say that the falling off in the exports of wheat since the harvest of 1903 has been most unexpected and surprising, and has taken place to a large extent in Great Britain, which is the greatest wheat-importing country in the world. Up to 1903 or at any rate for the five years from 1898 to 1902 inclusive, the United States sent us 54 per cent. of the total amount of wheat brought into this country. What must be the disappointment of the exporters then to find that the United States has fallen into the position of fifth place among the countries supplying Great Britain, the place of honour being taken by the British East Indies, whose exports have risen from 6,000,000 quarters in 1902 to over 17,000,000 quarters in 1904, while the exports of the United States have fallen from close on 33,000,000 quarters in 1902 to less than 7,000,000 quarters in 1904. At the same time, it is curious to remark that Canada has made little progress, the countries that have come to the front being the aforementioned British East Indies, Argentina, Russia, and Australia. Of course, in part, this, no doubt, is due to the bad harvest of 1903, but history shows that when, owing to exceptional circumstances, an export trade changes its locality, that change is apt to become permanent.

AGRICULTURE IN TIBET.

Should the treaty with Tibet secure the ends which the Tibetan Mission had in view, the character of its agriculture will assume an interesting form, and some useful particulars are given about it in an article by Charles Black in the current number of the *Monthly Review*. He says the staple production is wool raised on the enormous areas of pasture-land in the northern and western parts of the country. It is called pashm or shawl wool, a soft costly wool, much prized in the East and elsewhere. It can only be grown in cold countries, and is produced in the Jang-Thang, the vast expanse of undulating highlands covered with succulent grass. But the Tibetans themselves neither know the value of this wool, nor how to collect it, so that there is a great opening for the industry. Captain Elwes brought some samples home in 1887 and showed them at a meeting at Bradford. He says: "I have a blanket made from it which, after thirty-three years' hard wear on my camping trips, is still as good as when made, and if flocks of Tibetan sheep were driven down to the plains and killed there mutton of excellent quality might be in Calcutta in twenty-four hours' time." He thinks that the people would welcome free intercourse, and adds, "As there is no other known point on the whole range of the Himalayas where the passage is so short and

easy, and where the dry climate of the highlands comes so close to the plains as in the Chumbi Valley."

APPLES FOR LIVESTOCK.

So plentiful is the supply of apples this year that a French agricultural paper has been recommending that they might be used as food for cattle. He works out the price at about £1 per ton, but there is some doubt as to whether analysis will show that the farmer has a chance of getting this back. One thing that can be said in favour of apples is that livestock are fond of them. Most of us have seen the stags in park or woodland

standing on their hind legs to reach the high-growing crab-apples, and at a cider-press which the writer visits occasionally there is a tame deer which during the progress of cider-making cannot easily be kept out of the yard, where it comes to steal the fruit. After the apples have been pressed, the cheese makes excellent food, and can also be kept as ensilage. However, the apple is weak in nitrogenous constituents, and its value as a food depends largely upon the mucilage and hyper-carbonates. It would not, even in an exceptional season, be practicable in England to feed dairy-stock with apples.

PARTRIDGE-DRIVING AT RUSHMORE.



W. A. Rouch.

HIGH OVER THE SCRÆNS.

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SOME sixteen miles south of Salisbury, near the Dorset border, is the fine estate to which the late General Augustus Pitt Rivers succeeded on the death of the late Earl Rivers. The discovery by this great authority on the ways of primitive man and of his modern survival of the famous prehistoric playground which he subsequently opened to the public, has made many thousands of visitors annually more or less familiar with its beauty.

Three years ago Mr. A. Glen Kidston rented the house and shooting, with the methods and management of which the present article is mainly concerned. A considerable part of the estate consists of the ancient Cranborne Chase, a Royal hunting-ground since the days of King John, after whom the village near, Tollard Royal, is in a measure named. The chase consists of ancient hazel thicket, white

beam trees, wild plum, beeches, and plenty of ash, and is a most interesting survival of the old natural woodland of the primeval forest of the high grounds of Wilts and Dorset. Part is clear "lawns," where the trees stand open, as on the New Forest lawns, while part is very thick. A large portion of the chase was enclosed and turned into park, or rather was enclosed and emparked, for it very largely keeps its old character. The result is that instead of being devoid of flowers, as are most parks, that at Rushmore abounds in them. In spring the whole ground is blue with wild hyacinths in the rides and thickets, as well as round the trees inside the deer-paling that protects them, for the deer (mainly Japanese and fallow) are particularly fond of browsing on these flowers, and soon crop them short.

One peculiarity of this chase is that though it swarms with ground game, the rabbits burrow very little. They lie out in the



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WALKING THE MUSTARD.

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MR. RALPH SNEYD.

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hazel and wild plum scrub and in the thick masses of furze. The result is twofold. In the first place, the foxes, which are numerous, also follow their example, and not only lie out, but also drop their cubs on the ground in some patch of fern, in preference to having their litters in an earth. In the second, the rabbits, unlike those which swarm in equal numbers on such Norfolk heaths as Wretham or Thetford Warren, cannot be killed with nets and ferrets, but have to be shot. No less than 22,500 rabbits were shot there last year. It is also pretty certain that such a head of rabbits always proves a great attraction to ground vermin, such as stoats, weasels, and cats. In the open chase there are some wild roe-deer. These do not increase, not because they do not breed, but because the foxes have discovered that their fawns are good to eat, and kill them off; a fact which Charles St. John noted in the case of the foxes living on the Moray sandhills. Including other ground rented by the present tenant, the total of the shooting is more than 10,000 acres. It is high, open, and undulating, the house itself standing at an elevation of some 600ft. above the sea, while Bournemouth is only some twenty-two miles distant. The greater

part of the shooting is over the Dorset border, though Rushmore House itself is in Wilts. Round the outside there is much down, both open and wooded; but the centre is enclosed and highly cultivated. There is very little water on any part of the property, and what there is is principally held in dew-ponds, which it seems from recent experiments are mainly indebted for their supply to fogs and mists, and are therefore placed on the very summits of the hills. It is a curious fact that on this property there are no more partridges where there is a water supply than on the beats where it is very scarce or almost absent. The ground has the advantage of not being adjacent to small or over-shot properties. On the west lies Lord Pembroke's Wilton estate, though the nearest part is mainly down, almost without houses. On the south is St. Giles's, Lord Shaftesbury's property, and on the south-west Lord Alington's, but only a narrow angle of this actually

adjoins, while Ferne, the home of the late Sir W. Grove, is on the north-west, now the property of Colonel Charlesworth.

When first leased, it was found that though it appeared to



W. A. Rouch.

A FRESH START.

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be admirable partridge land, the stock of birds was very low and that of vermin very high. In order to give the birds a chance, a campaign was undertaken against their enemies, who, with an ancient woodland like the chase as a kind of headquarters, had enjoyed rather more than their share of the good things of this life. Eleven keepers, six of whom were assigned to special partridge beats, soon made an impression on the vermin. The figures are interesting, as showing how the latter will swarm and make it practically impossible for the harmless game birds to have a chance if not checked. Even in the season 1903-1904 a total of 7,028 head was destroyed! These included no owls and only two magpies. But in the list were 4,988 of those execrable vermin, rats, 154 cats, 271 weasels, and 291 stoats. A very large number of hedgehogs, which are extremely mischievous to partridges' eggs, were also trapped.

It will be seen that even now the percentage of vermin killed on the estate is larger than that of partridges. The keepers are regularly paid for vermin killed, at the rate of 1d. per rat, and 3d. for all others except the poaching cat, which is credited at 6d. After this first and absolutely necessary work of checking,



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MRS. GLEN KIDSTON WATCHES LORD DARNLEY.

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though not, as will be seen, of killing off, the vermin, the partridge ground was distributed into six beats of varying size. The outside beats, which are open and partly consist of downland, were considerably easier to look after than the interior beats, which were enclosed, and, having more stock on, also contained many more nests in proportion to their size to be looked after. The birds were spared both for the first year, when only 400 brace were shot, and during the second, when only a few more were killed than in the first. This year, as a result of the various activities and precautions to be mentioned later, the head of partridges had increased so admirably that 1,000 brace were killed in the first six days' driving only, in spite of one or two very serious set-backs last summer of a most unusual character. Having secured protection for the nests from vermin, the stock was strengthened by rearing from imported Hungarian eggs, and also by exchanging eggs in the nests. Mr. Glen Kidston believes that the birds

pairing with those of a neighbouring covey. Care is therefore taken to transfer eggs even from adjacent nests. If each holds eight eggs, for instance, four eggs from one nest will be put into the other, and *vice versa*. It is also certain that by driving on open ground like this the partridges get moved and mixed far more than they would be if walked up and shot. Besides preserving the original stock and looking after the nests, large numbers of Hungarian eggs were set and the birds reared. There are two main rearing-fields, about one and a-half miles apart. But the birds are not kept there long. After about three weeks they



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BETWEEN THE DRIVES.

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are moved off with the hens in the coops, and set about in different fields, preferably of roots, from one to three coops

being put into each field. This is to prevent the tame-reared birds from packing, as they would otherwise do. The estate has one very great advantage from the point of view of the partridge rearer. There are any number of ants' eggs easily procurable on all parts of it, which makes it far more easy to feed the young partridges, for which this is the main food used, together with some rice and millet seed. Last year, though the ground is obviously extremely healthy, the estate suffered a most



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A SCREEN IN MID-FIELD.

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disastrous loss in a form so novel that owners of partridge manors will hear of it with dismay. The case has been referred to in

the *Field*, but the name of the estate and the circumstances were not then published. When a great number of young partridges on one rearing-field were three weeks old, and apparently perfectly healthy, they were attacked by a most malignant disease, which in three days killed 1,200, so rapid, contagious, and deadly was its course. This is just one of those cases which a bacteriological laboratory, partly supported by Government and partly by fees, would be of real service in dealing with. A considerable number of French partridges have also been reared and introduced on to the estate for driving. During the early summer all the nests are carefully watched, and all eggs in dangerous places are either moved and put under other sitting birds, or are placed under hens or in incubators. The chipped eggs are then placed under sitting partridges, which complete the hatching off and take the young birds away into the fields. Previously the eggs of these sitting birds have been removed and their place taken by unfertile eggs or bantams' eggs. The downs, broken up by portions of the ancient chase, are by no means bad ground for partridges;



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OVER MR. C. E. HUNTER.

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but it is intended to create artificial nesting-places on the more open part by dropping piles of straw about and pegging these over with an arch of stiff thorns to prevent the crows getting at the eggs.

The day's shooting illustrated here took place on October 13th, and was followed by one on the 14th. The photographs give an excellent idea of the country and its suitability for carrying a large head of partridges and for driving. The undulating nature of the ground and the large fields make the birds come high naturally; for in the latter the butts, ingeniously made of wattle-hurdle in which a second hurdle is tied on to the lower one by the aid of tall stakes, are often set at a long distance out in a field, as well as some way down a slope, so that the birds rise at the gun, in addition to the height at which they naturally fly. The picture showing the birds coming high over the screens gives an epitome of the whole day's sport. The near screen, in which Lord Darnley is standing, is far



W. A. Rouch.

THE GUNS.

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away down the slope of the big field in which the stalks of the mustard, the leaves of which have been eaten by the sheep, are still standing. Three lots of birds, the farthest at least 400 yds. away, are coming on and over, and on the skyline the minute

forms of the drivers, with their flags, are seen. "Between the Drives" shows the interval, or the valley, between the second and third drives. The keeper is counting the bag. The other illustrations explain themselves; but the height at which the birds come in all the drives is remarkable. Only one set of beaters, some thirty in all, are at present used. But they get over the ground quickly, and some thirteen or fourteen drives are put into a day. The guns are Mr. A. Glen Kidston, Lord Darnley, the Hon. Sydney Holland, Mr. Eric Hambro, M.P., Mr. Ralph Sneyd of Keele, Colonel Gerald Cuthbert, and Mr. C. Hunter, the present tenant of the famous Wemmergill grouse moor, where, unfortunately, the season has been most unsatisfactory this year, and was not less so last. C. J. CORNISH.



W. A. Rouch.

MOTORS FOR SHOOTING.

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BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

MR. MARION CRAWFORD is such a very good writer that we have not been in the habit of going to him in search of "sensation." Yet in the latest of his productions he has given us one of those panting, lurid, exciting stories that would make one forget the tedium of the longest railway journey. By the exercise of a consummate art, matured by long experience, he has been able to make his story convincing, and that in itself is a high tribute to him, for his people, to put it mildly, are very Transatlantic in character. The chief villain in *Whosoever Shall Offend* . . . (Macmillan) would have done credit to Eugene Sue himself. Folco Corbario, in the course of this faithful history, commits three murders and attempts one more, to say nothing of lesser offences against the law. Before coming on the stage he has, under the guise of a doctor and with a sham nurse as a confederate, "done for" a patient in an American hospital. In Italy he marries a rich widow some years his senior, and by the strictest attention to the decorum of conduct worms himself so far into the favour of his wife, that she makes a will leaving to him the reversal of her property in case of the death of her son by a former husband, a delicate youth who is the "little one" the offence against whom is the crowning iniquity of Corbario. When this testament is drawn up the model husband poisons his wife quite in the old style of melodrama, by means of a poison that leaves no trace behind—the discovery of a great scientist who in the fiction of our forefathers would have been a wizard or astrologer. On the same day he makes a murderous attack upon the lad, but only succeeds in fracturing what in unscientific language may be called the "memory spot" of his victim's brain, so that the young man is able, when he recovers from the temporary unconsciousness into which he has been thrown, to wander about. But he has become

oblivious of his past history, and arrives in a state of extreme wretchedness at the door of a little inn, where Boniface puts him in a garret, and hopes by only giving him the coarsest food to end his days, and, in the meanwhile, steals the jewels and other valuables belonging to his guest. But this villainous plot is frustrated by the appearance on the scene of the beautiful and muscular Regina, a peasant girl of the most charming appearance, and one who can take an ordinary man under her "oxter," as they say in Scotland, and run up and down stairs with him. She steals wine and food, and nurses the sick man, and, of course, falls in love with him, even though she has heard him refer to his own name, Marcello, and couple it with the name of Aurora, the girl whom he loved before the damage was done to his memory spot. Eventually she gets him into a hospital, and on his partial recovery, while

"Memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only,"

he in his new state falls in love with this peasant girl, who for her part surrenders herself with a loyalty that is in way royal, though it belongs to her class. Now the stepfather when he comes to know of these things and understands that the boy had not seen who struck the blow, continues the course which he had followed before of encouraging this innocent lad to follow all sorts of vice and dissipation, in the well-founded hope that a few months of it will bring him to the grave. The most difficult and interesting problem that Mr. Crawford had to solve arises from the following circumstances. The young man is genuine and honest. He was true to Aurora until he lost his memory; in his new state he is equally true to Regina, but the physician

by a surgical operation restore the lost faculty, and while he is wandering about from one resort of dissipation to another in Europe with Regina, he meets his old love Aurora. What happened afterwards we leave the reader to find out, only informing those who are nervous by temperament that the solution comes by a dreadful means, including Regina's father's attempt to murder her, and her dramatic offer to let him do so after he has been foiled. One thing we wish he had kept out, and that is, the brutal murder of Corbario's old confederate in a garret. After all this, it will probably be a surprise to the reader to find that the ending is a happy one. In less skilled hands than those of Mr. Marion Crawford such a story would have simply shocked by its sensational crime and barbarity. As it is, the effect after reading is something like that of a nightmare, and those who like nightmares may be recommended to purchase the volume.

Whether we like or dislike Mr. Hall Caine's new venture, *The Prodigal Son* (Heinemann), it is known to everybody that the thing will be read, and the present writer admits with a groan that he has performed that operation. Four hundred closely written pages of the most Cainish of Mr. Hall Caine's work form no slight undertaking. The story is an Icelandic one, and although it does not set good taste so frequently at defiance as most of his other work, it furnishes what will probably be regarded as the most signal example of bad taste extant. All the world knows that at one time Mr. Hall Caine was secretary to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a life of whom he has, in fact, written. Equally well is known the fact that Rossetti in a moment of remorse because, in plain words, he had not been faithful to his wife, buried his poems in her grave and later on had them dug up and printed. The latest and perhaps the best of his biographers has condemned this act in words which have been referred to already in these pages. Now Mr. Hall Caine, in order to make up for his own barrenness of invention, has copied this incident point by point into the book before us. The prodigal son, Oscar Stephenson, begins his career, as far as this book is concerned, by returning to Iceland, and in his brother's absence making love to his affianced wife, with the result that the elder brother accidentally comes upon them engaged in very ardent flirtation. Instead of slaying his successful rival, as might almost have been expected from his character he is generous enough to forego his claim to the girl's hand on receiving an assurance from each that they love one another, and will marry and carry out the parents' desires. But scarcely has this been settled, when

Oscar falls in love with the girl's sister, or, at any rate, if he does not fall in love with her, kisses her and conducts himself as a lover. With such a beginning it will scarcely surprise the reader to find that the young wife meets with an early death after giving birth to one child, and hence the burial of his works of genius in her grave. But almost at the same time he had forged a bill on his father for an enormous amount, and though the old man, to save the feelings of his mother, meets the bill, it is only on condition that the prodigal departs from Iceland. The far country to which he journeys is that home of so many "expatriated spiritualisms"—London; and it gives Mr. Hall Caine an opportunity of picturing life in a cheap lodging-house in the Strand, where at times this particular prodigal, like his prototype, would have been glad to have "the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." However, his musical faculty finds him employment in the theatre where his sister-in-law was now a bright particular star. He, she, and a third party go to Monte Carlo, where first he makes an immense fortune at the tables, and subsequently is broken. It is just at this moment he thinks of those magnificent compositions buried in Iceland in his wife's grave, and he sells the right to unearth them in order to go on gambling and have the wherewithal to buy presents for his sister-in-law. But fortune is dead against him, and the siren lures him to destruction. The manager at Monte Carlo, where he has been very popular, asks him to play with marked cards, and, though he refuses on his own account, he accepts at the solicitation of the young lady, with the result that just when his winnings have come to something like a king's ransom, an ancient and "cute" old American demands that the cards should be examined, and the manager, to put the matter with homely vulgarity, is in a hole, out of which he gets by discharging a revolver and swearing through thick and thin that Oscar has committed suicide in one of the bedrooms. Thus the wanderer is compelled to return to London without money and without even a name. He is still at the very foot of the ladder, but in a surprising space of time—it was fifteen years by the calendar, but only about a page by the novel—he has gained the possession of uncountable wealth and world-wide fame as a composer under the name of Christiansson. Incredibly rich and famous, he determines upon journeying back to his old home in Iceland, where the author seems to take an almost fiendish delight in bringing him face to face with old acquaintances, who, while paying the most sincere tribute to the greatness of Christiansson, nearly always stumble into talking about Oscar Stephenson, and what a frightful scoundrel he had been, a cheat,



A. W. Glover.

SHADOWS ON THE SEA.

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a thief, untruthful, disloyal, in every position in life. Needless to say, the prodigal is reformed in the end, and as far as plot is concerned, the story is by no means a bad one, though the theme be as old as humanity itself. What we found wearisome was the fact that the author writes entirely without the saving grace of humour, and with equal lack of any knowledge of human nature, or of any sympathy with those various whims and oddities

which distinguish the individual from other men of his type. In the scenes there is a thin theatricality that may very well "split the ears of the groundlings," but is in no wise calculated to delight anyone possessed of the most rudimentary knowledge of what literature is and should be. The best that can be said of the story, as a whole, is that Mr. Hall Caine has occasionally written worse.

THE LAST OF THE OLD SUSSEX PLOUGH OXEN.

DRAUGHT oxen in Sussex, and, indeed, in most parts of England, are becoming steadily fewer. They are a survival of Saxon times which ill accords with the push and hurry of these days; they are slower than horses, to which they have been giving place for some generations past, and another dozen or so of years will probably see the last of them. It seems a pity; during a thousand years and more the ox has drawn the wains and dragged the stubborn plough for uncounted generations of Sussex farmers; he is a most picturesque survival—I know nothing more beautiful or more in touch with a South Down landscape than a team of plough oxen—but he will have to go. For him, alas, good beast, the times are out of joint, and the land which he has tilled with such willing strength and such sturdy application during long centuries will soon know him no more.

Even within the last ten years one team after another of draught oxen has been abandoned in East Sussex. For years past the old Sussex red oxen have been displaced by the Welsh black breed, and these, in turn, are being slowly driven out of the field. The new generation of farmers cannot do with them in these days, when every shilling counts, and speedier and improved methods of labour have to be utilised. In all East Sussex I only know of two places where the fine old Sussex breed of red cattle are still employed. These are at Streame Farm, Chiddingfold, where Mr. John Guy still makes use of this sturdy and handsome strain, and at Posenworth (Mr. L. Huth's), near Waldron. At Streame the photographs from which the accompanying illustrations are reproduced were taken recently. The middle yoke are young oxen just being broken for draught purposes, and the leading and after yokes are beasts of good average size. These Sussex draught oxen are big, strong beasts, reminding one irresistibly of the great, high-withered Afrikaner trek oxen used so much by the Boers in South Africa for waggon work. As in South Africa so in Sussex, each animal has its name, which it understands and answers to. When



J. Coster.

THE SUSSEX PLOUGH.

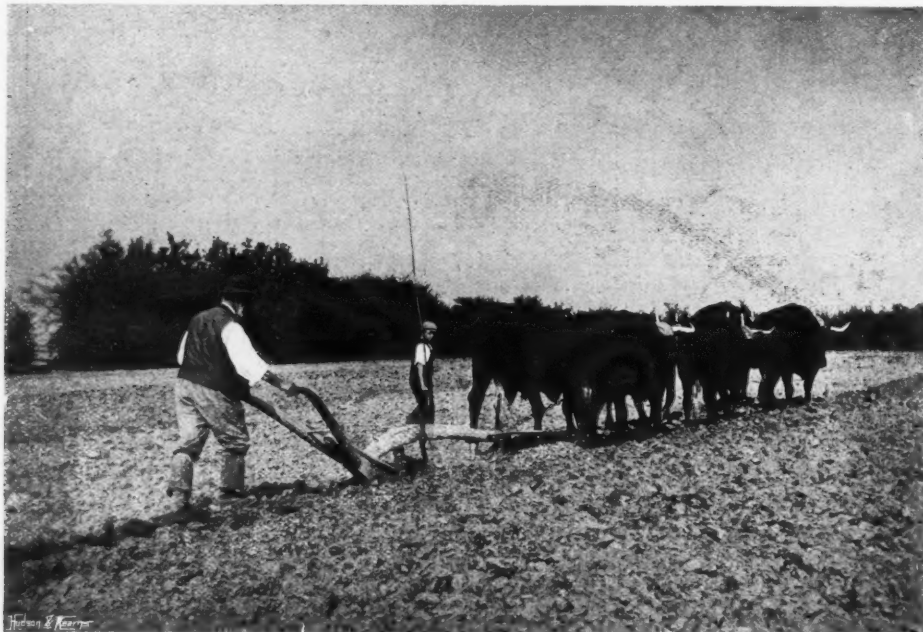
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broken, they are docile, intelligent beasts, answering perfectly to the boy with the goad, who is acquainted with all their little idiosyncrasies, and, after their own slow but sturdy method, getting through plenty of work. In addition to ploughing, they are employed also in waggon work. At Streame Farm there is a large pool, or lake, of water, which is being steadily invaded by a vast expanse of reed-bed. When these reeds are cut, the oxen are employed to cart them, and a wain, laden high with reeds, and drawn by these old-fashioned Sussex cattle, forms as primitive and as handsome a picture as rural England can show.

Sussex cattle come of a very ancient stock, by some authors supposed to be that from which sprang the Hereford, Devon, and even the North Welsh and Gloucester breeds. Of these breeds the Sussex resemble, perhaps, most nearly the Devon cattle; they are, however, bigger and more massive than Devons, and less neat and graceful in appearance, while the colour is not

so deep and vivid a red as that of the West Country beasts, and is more of a chestnut brown. They grow, as may be seen by the illustration, strong and spreading horns.

If the Sussex cattle are somewhat less dainty in appearance than the "rubies of the West," they have, nevertheless, many excellent qualities of their own. Sussex soil is notoriously not so rich as the deep red land of Devon, and Sussex beasts are wont to thrive where the Devon, accustomed to richer pastures, would scarcely maintain himself in flesh. The Sussex, in effect, are a hardier race and can thrive on poorer pastures. Of old the cows were reckoned good milkers, but they are now regarded by some judges as somewhat deficient in dairying quality. The breed has been a good deal improved in modern times, and the Sussex ox is always looked upon as an excellent beef producer. With stall-feeding he can be fattened for the butcher at an early age. He kills well, and yields the right proportion of prime meat in the best parts of the body. Possibly it is for these reasons that the red ox of Sussex is not



J. Coster.

A TEAM OF RED OXEN.

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se'dom, if ever, seen in the plough or the waggon; he is, I suppose, too good a yielder of beef to be devoted to the slow and not over-lucrative draught work in which his predecessors so greatly excelled.

Sussex draught oxen are harnessed to the plough by the old English method of yokes and bows. Upon the whole, this system may be pronounced by far the best. By the use of the bow, which may be noticed passing underneath the neck, the ox is enabled to throw the whole of his immense weight and strength upon the yoke, and this without pressing upon his windpipe and interfering with his breathing. The Dutch method, in use at the Cape, is nothing like so good. There, in place of the wooden bow, a "strop," or thong of twisted raw hide, is passed from the yoke under the throat of the ox and secured on the other side. When straining at a piece of hard work in South Africa—and Heaven knows the work of the South African trek ox is terribly severe—it always seems to me that the good beast is far too often half-throttled just in the most crucial part of his labours by the pressure of the "strop" upon his windpipe. I believe that, if the old English method of yokes and bows was substituted in South Africa for "strops" and "yokeskeys," the work of the trek ox would be far more easily performed; in fact, a team of twelve oxen would, I believe, perform the work of sixteen or eighteen under present Cape methods.

It is a curious fact that the Dutch method of yoking at the Cape corresponds exactly with Eastern custom. You will find the same mode of harnessing oxen in Burma, Ceylon, and, I believe, India. It is possible, I think, that the earliest Dutch farmers at the Cape imported their method of inspanning oxen from the East, probably from Java, where they were already settled. The Hottentots, who possessed the Cape before the Dutch landed there in 1652, had certainly troops of indigenous cattle of their own; but they had as certainly no method of using their beasts for ploughing or any other draught purpose. They rode them, as they do still in Namaqualand and along the Orange River, but they knew nothing of draught work.

In Spain and some parts of Germany another system of

yoking oxen is in vogue—that by the horns. The yoke is hollowed out to fit the horns and forehead of the ox, and is fastened to them by means of a strong leather thong or strap. This method of yoking can be used either in front of or behind the horns. In either case, the motive power proceeds from the head and neck and not from the shoulders. On the whole, after some study of the various methods, this system of yoking oxen may be pronounced inferior to the old Anglo-Saxon plan. The English system takes a little longer in the inspanning, it is true, but it is so incontestably superior that it ought to supplant the present Cape methods of "strops" and "yokeskeys." In Natal, where British colonists more abound than elsewhere in South Africa, English yokes and bows are occasionally employed, to the vast comfort and convenience and increased tractive power of the cattle. Elsewhere the Dutch fashion prevails entirely, and the Boers are so opinionated and so conservative a race that it would be a hard matter to convert them to a new method, and that method an English one!

At Streame Farm, Chiddingly, in one of the quietest and most peaceful parts of Sussex, you may still see the fine old red Sussex ox ploughing the soil and drawing the waggon. It is a most pleasant and most interesting spectacle, which one enjoys with a mingled sentiment of regret that this most ancient agricultural practice should be so nearly extinct. By the year 1920 I doubt much whether a single draught ox will be seen at work in any part of Sussex.

As to other shires, where oxen are still employed for draught—Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, and Gloucester, for instance—I cannot speak with authority; but I believe that in these counties also the picturesque old practice is fast dying out. The more the pity! When motors are seen upon the land for ploughing purposes, as I suppose they will be one of these days, when the horse has followed the ox into banishment, half the beauty and the peace of the rural landscape will have vanished utterly.

H. A. BRYDEN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AN ORANGE PEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Last year and just now the orange gardens within and around Seville are being completely destroyed by an insect of a reddish colour, which first appears upon the leaf, and then spreads over the whole surface of the fruit, rendering it dry and unfit for use. I should esteem it a great kindness if you would insert this letter in your paper, hoping that amongst its many readers someone may suggest a cure for this plague.—M. F. JOHNSTON, British Vice-Consulate, Seville.

A QUESTION ABOUT BATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have recently been asked to undertake to write for a new county history the pages dealing with the local mammalia. As it was an inland county, and I was quite familiar with the haunts and habits of the animals in it, I undertook to do so. But I had reckoned without the bats! Bats being mammals that live in the air—a most irregular proceeding—and being also creatures which no one would willingly shoot or trap, and which do no harm, but, on the contrary, nothing but good, they almost never come into the hands of people who do not make the family a special study. Personally, I should be most sorry to shoot a bat, even to determine its species. Yet it is almost impossible to do so without shooting it. There are no less than sixteen species credited to the British Isles, though some are very rare. They are all nocturnal, and it is the rarest thing possible to catch one asleep in their daylight hiding-places, except in a church tower or crevice in a roof, where their discovery is quite accidental.—X.

THEY GOT HIM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is this snap-shot of my dogs of any use to you? They are a smooth-haired dog and a rough-haired bitch, looking for a rat at the side of the road. I might mention that they got him.—P. BELLINGHAM.

RETRIEVER TRIALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A valued correspondent, and a very practical sportsman, writes to me on the subject of my article on the retriever trials. His objection is, I think, the result of a misunderstanding, either by him or me, of the term "excite-



ment." I should like to publish his name and his letter, but the latter he marks private. As others, too, will certainly take the same objection if they understand the word I used as he has, he will, I am sure, forgive me if I quote a line of his letter without publishing his name. He says, "How you can urge that the first quality of a no-slip retriever is total absence of excitement!" Then he goes on to add that "I would not give a fig for those slack brutes one sees lying down, actually lying down, whilst a hot corner is on. I like to see a retriever taking interest in the game, up on its legs marking birds that fall, turning round if need be to see what is going on, but, of course, never moving from heel, say, more than a couple of yards." Then, at the end, my correspondent abjures me, "for goodness sake do not advocate absence of excitement any more. It only spells want of interest." If this last remark were correct, I most certainly would never again advocate absence of excitement in a retriever; but I selected my word carefully, after many years of examination of the characters of retrievers and other dogs. To put it plainly, I used it because I think I see a tendency to encourage excitement, in the idea that it is the father of industry in the dog, especially in the retriever. Forty years ago it was usually advised to let

pointers and setters run wild before starting to point, in order that they might gain a liking for the sport of questing for game by means of the excitement of the chase, and so on. I gradually found out that this was quite unnecessary, and, indeed, harmful, since puppies that were never allowed to run wild on game would, nevertheless, exert their utmost physical powers to go fast and long and to find game, and this even before game was ever shot to them. You can hardly accuse a statue of excitement; and a statuesque point is very nearly as much as it the opposite of the appearance of excitement. Take the falcon as an example of intense interest. I think it can be shown that he has no excitement in the presence of game. First, he will not chase unless he is hungry; second, he will not fly unless he starts from a point of vantage. Now, if he was excitable, he would fly at every creature he saw; at least, he would do so when hungry. His energy, however, does not in the least depend upon excitement, but only on hunger. Take foxhounds: it was said of Osbaldistone's hounds, when he had the Pytchley country, that they were so quick on the line on account of their absence of excitement. Take retrievers: I gave an instance in my article of an excellent partridge-retriever, that, nevertheless, was too excitable to catch more than one wounded hare in his life. Take spaniels that hunt in teams: they are whipped off fur and feather from puppyhood, and never allowed to chase or touch game to retrieve it; yet the burning fire that was born in them, the unthinking love of questing for the scent of game, is not reduced either by a lifetime or generations of this treatment. To sum up, I have had slugs and have tried, by exciting them, to make good retrievers of them, but I have found that a dog that requires this is never a stayer—"throws it up" when tired; and I have learnt that if the urging influence is not born in the pup it cannot be put into the dog. These are some of my reasons for saying that excitement and interest are different qualities entirely; and I would add that a slip retriever should have no more excitement than a non-slip retriever. With plenty of practice, a dog that runs in at the shot will soon learn, like the falcon, only to go when there is a good prospect of success; he will become an admirable judge of the results of a shot, and detect a wounded

creature better than his master. As he does not bother to run in when there is a clean miss, he can be charged with a reduction of excitement as he increases his interest in the game and cleverness as a retriever. Those are my views, but nevertheless I think that "nervous excitement" would have expressed what I meant better than merely "excitement," and I thank my correspondent for giving me the chance to show exactly what I do mean.—ARGUS OLIVE.

A LARGE FUNGUS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—As your correspondent in your number of October 15th mentions a large puff-ball fungus, perhaps the enclosed photograph would be of some interest to your readers. The fungus (*Globaria bostva*, Linné; or *Lycoperdon*



maximum, Schaeffer) was found here on my place, and although pretty large ones are common, I have never seen another of this size. The puff-ball weighed 1 kilo. 760gr. The child holding it is nine years old. I may mention also, a fact not generally known, that when quite fresh and young they are excellent to eat.—E. M., Hungary.

AN INEFFECTUAL DOWSER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Acting on the advice of a professed water-finder that I should meet with a good supply at the depth of 65 ft. or a little over, I have sunk a well now reaching over 80 ft., passing through in places thick rock, but hitherto without success. Can any of your readers give me advice on the subject, whether it would be of any use to drive a heading or tunnel, as it seems to me to be useless (to say nothing of the heavy expense) to continue sinking.—C.

FOREIGN BIRDS IN ENGLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Five living birds of paradise, of no less than three species, have been brought safely to England by Mr. Walter Goodfellow, who made a journey to the Celebes expressly to obtain them. Of the birds, one is the great bird of paradise, two are lesser birds of paradise, and two are king birds of paradise. The great and lesser birds of paradise are almost alike, except in size, and are familiar because their plumage has long decorated hats. The lesser species has been brought alive to England before, the birds arriving quite

well, and having lived very largely on cockroaches caught on board ship. In 1885 one great bird of paradise was also brought to England, whence, after a sojourn at the "Zoo," it went to Antwerp. The Latin name, "Apeia"—footless—was given to it because all the skins brought to Europe were without feet. Though the birds of paradise are all fruit-eating crows, the astonishing variety of colour and form in their plumage makes them appear very unlike. The king bird of paradise, which until now has only been known in this country from stuffed specimens, has the head, throat, and upper surface crimson, the breast and belly white, a band of metallic green between the two, and long, racket-like feathers in its tail. The splendid case of birds of paradise in the Natural History Museum shows well the magnificent plumage of the different species.—J.

THE "LUCK" OF MUNCASTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The cup shown has been in the possession of the Lords of Muncaster for upwards of 450 years. When Henry VI. was fleeing from Scotland, the Baron of Muncaster gave him shelter at his castle. The King had nothing to give him in return but a small bowl of white Venetian glass, which was intended for baptismal use, and had probably been given him by the Pope. The heirs of Muncaster have always been baptised in it since. A local legend says that when the "Luck" is broken, the house of Muncaster will come to an end.—X. Y.



CAN ANIMALS REASON?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The author of the paper "Can Animals Reason?" in your issue of October 22nd urges objections against the conclusions of Lord Avebury and others as to the relation between instinct and reason. It is not my intention to discuss his arguments, which, after all, do not lead him to any definite conclusion, nor to attempt to indicate what, at all events, many zoologists believe to be the evolution of instinct. But I must say that the author of the paper has been singularly unfortunate in his choice of examples. In the first place, there is not the least doubt that the insect which he and the farm steward saw was not a bot-fly. The latter does not cause the least disturbance to the horse when depositing her eggs. It is possible that the species which lay in the neighbourhood of the muzzle do irritate to some degree, as is evidently the case with the nearly-allied sheep-noset fly, an example which would have served the purpose of the author of the paper much better. The same may be said with regard to the warble-fly, as the author of the article would see by referring to the *Veterinarian* for 1898, page 134, and to the literature referring to other species of warble-flies.—A. MEEK.

ARE RED DEER DETERIORATING?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—John Edwards-Moss, in his letter to your paper of October 15th, asks if I would say whether the head of the heavy stag I shot last year was in proportion to his bulk. My answer is no; I shot him because there was another with a better head. He had very long horns, especially brows, but not many points, also his horns had been injured in the wire fencing when soft. He had only single brows, which, to my mind, is a great defect. I have the cast horns of the other stag, thirteen points, weighing 8 lb. 9 oz. This year, however, he has only eleven points. He is nine years old (same age as last year's stag). He summered on the same flat, together with some hinds and their produce, and some Highland cattle and calves. The flat is wired round with a deer fence. When the rutting season commences, here and there the top wires are taken down, the tame stags go out and the wild deer come in. The spring this year was bad, wet and cold, and the growth of horn not nearly so good as last year among these enclosed deer, as well as with the wild deer. This, I think, may account for the eleven points instead of thirteen, and I think, too, may account for four royals in the Jura Forest this year against seven left last year. As to salt, I do not put it down here, as the deer have access to the seashore, but in my park at Wollaton I have for years given the deer lumps of salt; in fact, I give it to all my stock—horses of all kinds, cattle and sheep, all except pigs. I most thoroughly agree with Mr. Whitbread's remarks as to woods; I only wish we had them here, hard wood especially; to beech and oak might be added sweet chestnut.—MIDDLETON, Applecross, R.S.O., N.B.

A SHEAF OF OATS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The enclosed is a photograph of a sheaf of Tartar King oats, grown here, cut September 14th, and exhibited at the harvest thanksgiving service in Kilkeel recently, and of Mr. Harpur, the farm steward, height, 5 ft. 8 in.—KILMOREY, Mourne Park, Newry.

